

(12) **United States Patent**
Roman et al.

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(54) **DISPLAY INDICATING AIMING POINT
RELATIVE TO TARGET SIZE INDICATOR**

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U.S.C. 154(b) by 0 days.

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(65) **Prior Publication Data**

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Related U.S. Application Data

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Aug. 28, 2014, now Pat. No. 9,057,587, which is a
continuation-in-part of application No. 13/959,655,
filed on Aug. 5, 2013, now Pat. No. 9,068,795, which is
a continuation of application No. 13/599,450, filed on
Aug. 30, 2012, now Pat. No. 8,500,563, which is a
continuation of application No. 12/859,769, filed on
Aug. 19, 2010, now Pat. No. 8,282,493, said
application No. 14/471,786 is a continuation-in-part of
application No. 14/458,946, filed on Aug. 13, 2014,
now Pat. No. 9,212,868, which is a continuation of
application No. 13/959,655, filed on Aug. 5, 2013, now
Pat. No. 9,068,795.

(51) **Int. Cl.**

G06F 19/00 (2011.01)
F41G 1/467 (2006.01)
F41G 3/06 (2006.01)
F41G 1/473 (2006.01)
F41G 3/16 (2006.01)

F41G 3/08 (2006.01)
F41G 3/14 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC **F41G 1/467** (2013.01); **F41G 1/473**
(2013.01); **F41G 3/06** (2013.01); **F41G 3/08**
(2013.01); **F41G 3/142** (2013.01); **F41G 3/165**
(2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC F41G 1/38; F41G 3/06; F41G 1/467;
F41G 1/473; F41G 1/40; F41G 3/08; F41G
3/165; G02B 23/14; G02B 27/32; A63F
13/573; A63F 13/812; G05G 1/10; G05G
5/12; Y10T 29/49826; Y10T 74/1494
USPC 235/404, 407
See application file for complete search history.

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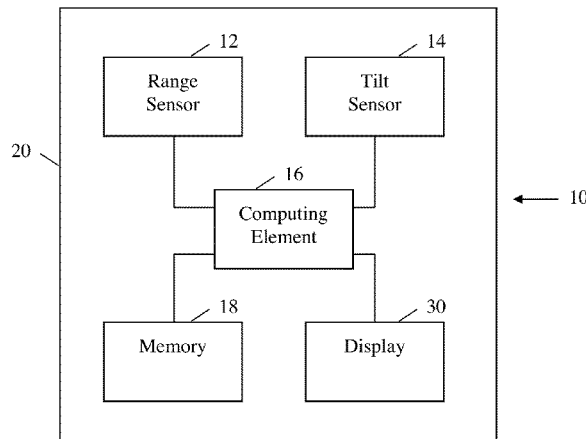
Primary Examiner — Thien M Le

(57)

ABSTRACT

An improved display provides information regarding a projectile trajectory so that a user is informed whether or not there is a clear shot. In some embodiments, an intermediate point in the projectile trajectory is an aiming point and is indicated in relation to the visualized target or target reference. The rangefinder device is calibrated to a weapon having a sight, for example, having a riflescope calibrated at 100 yards. The aiming point is displayed showing the intermediate point in the projectile trajectory that corresponds with riflescope cross hairs at a predetermined zero setting. The user places the riflescope cross hairs on the point visualized in the rangefinder device. Alternatively, the aiming point is displayed relative to the magnified image of the target, a generic reference image, or a user selectable reference images.

20 Claims, 58 Drawing Sheets



(56)

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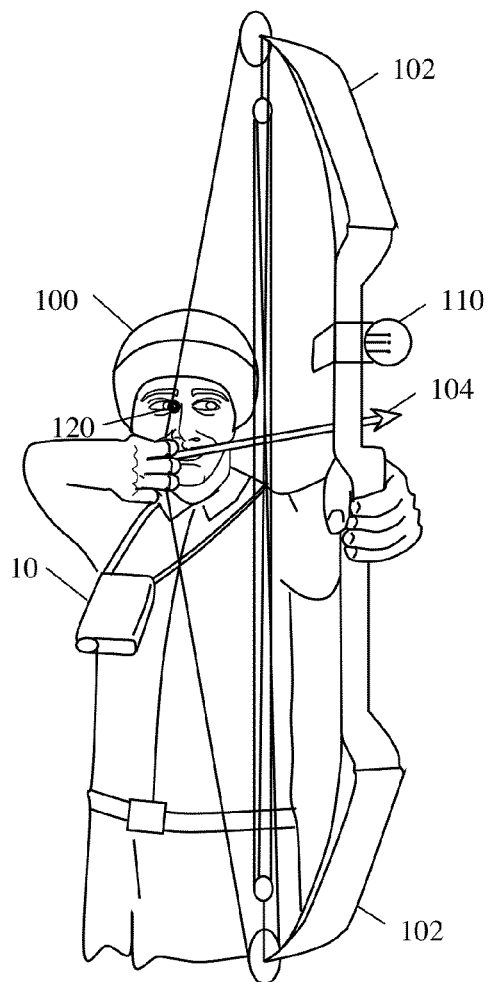


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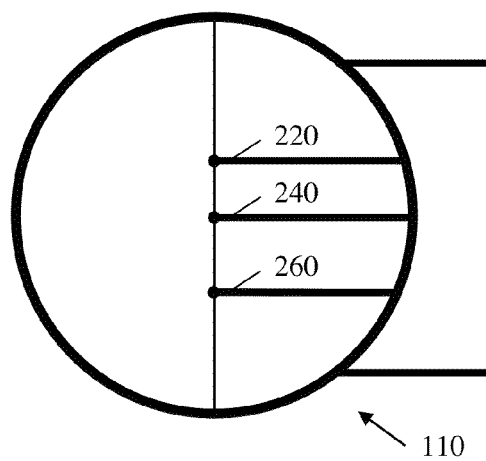


Fig. 2

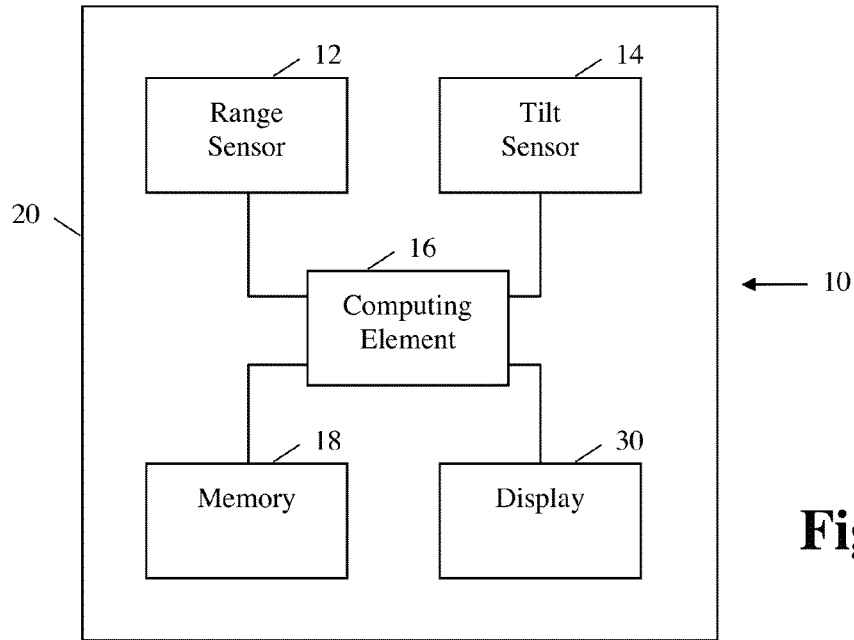


Fig. 3

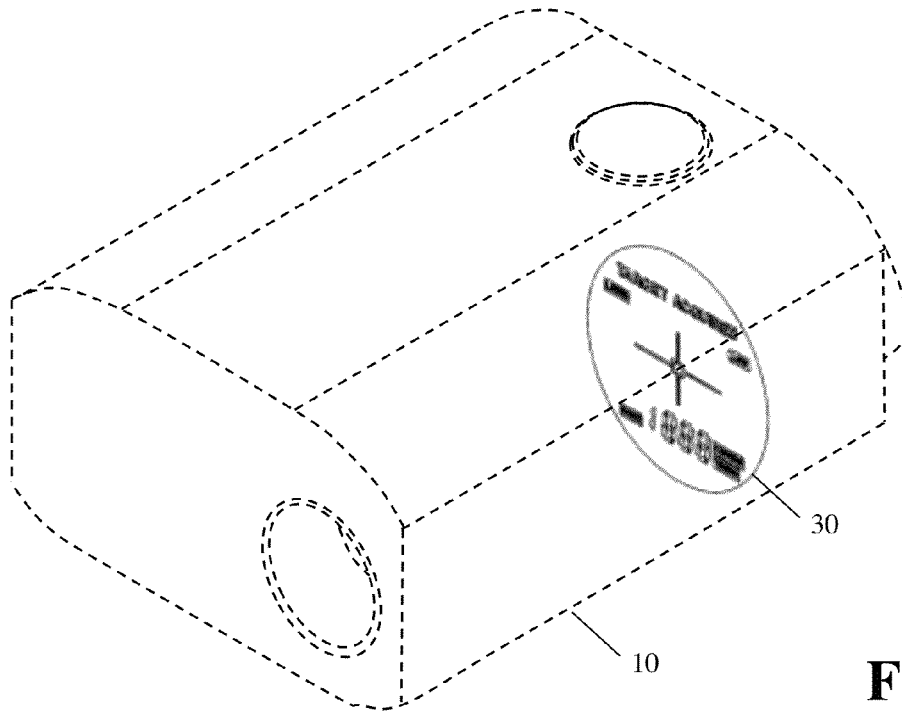


Fig. 4

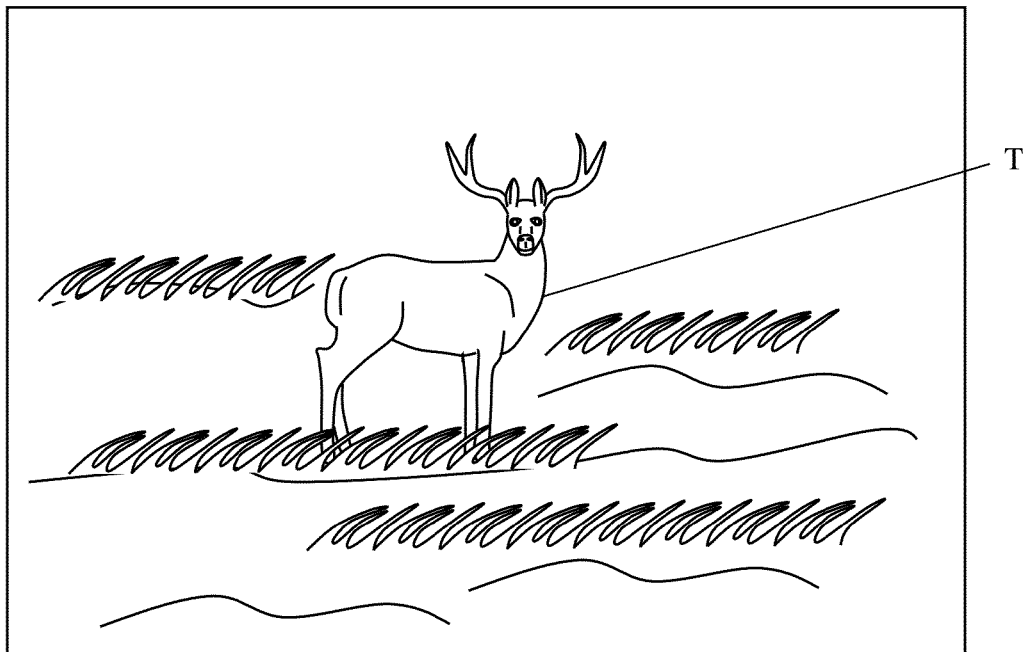


Fig. 5



Fig. 6

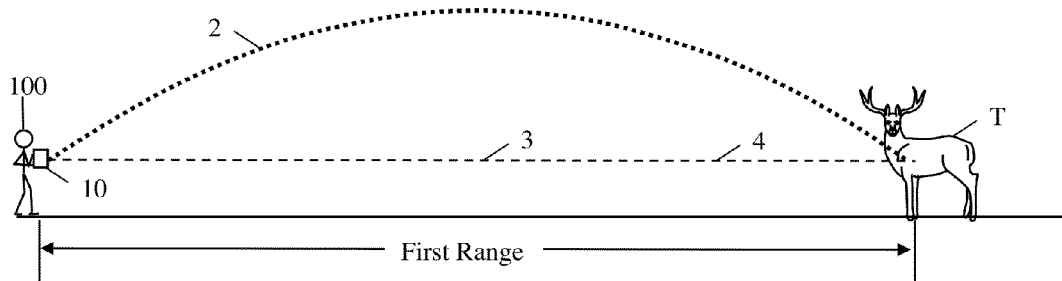


Fig. 7A

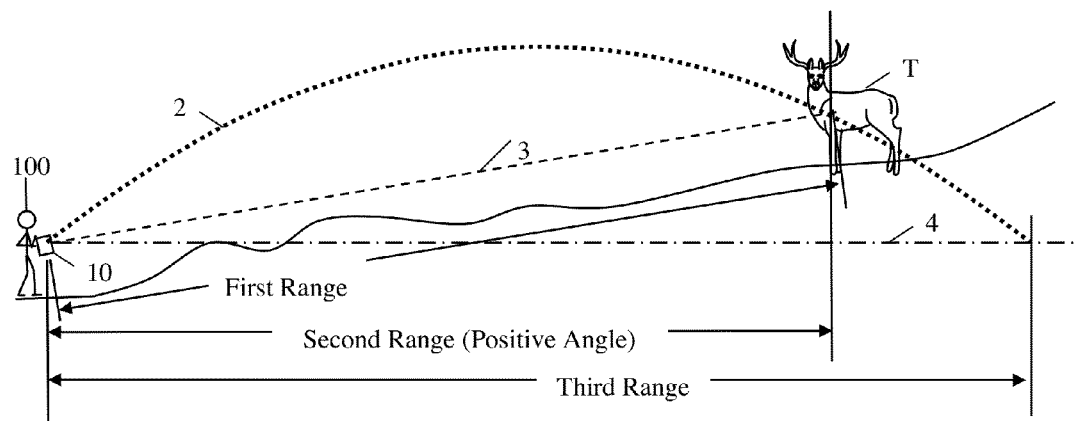


Fig. 7B

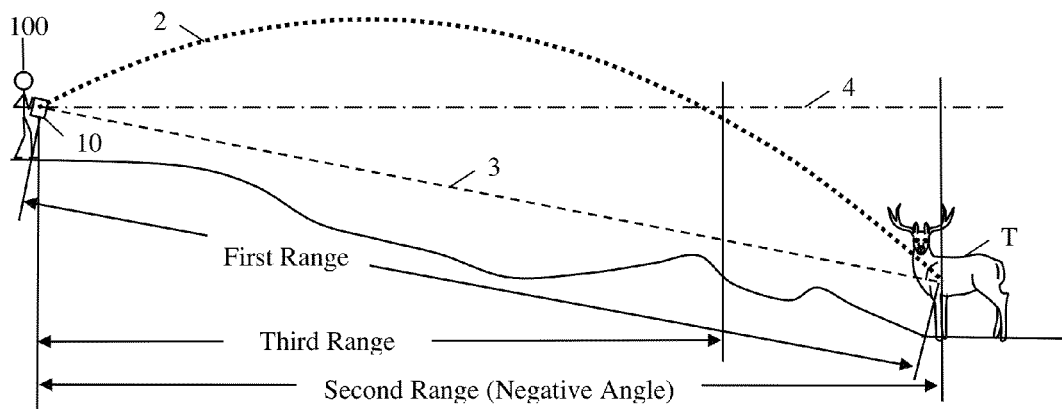


Fig. 7C

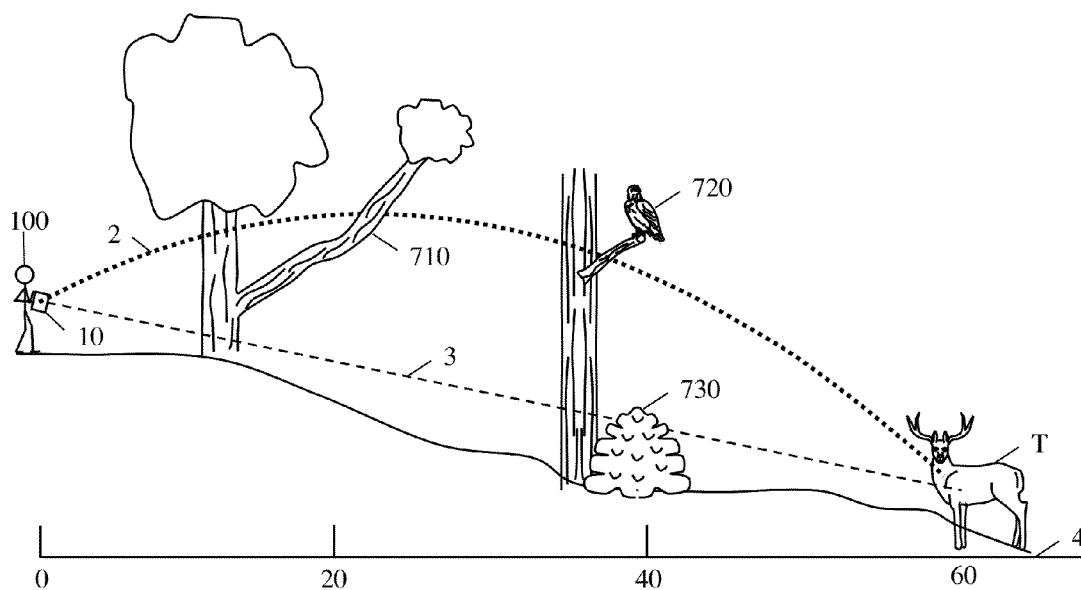


Fig. 7D

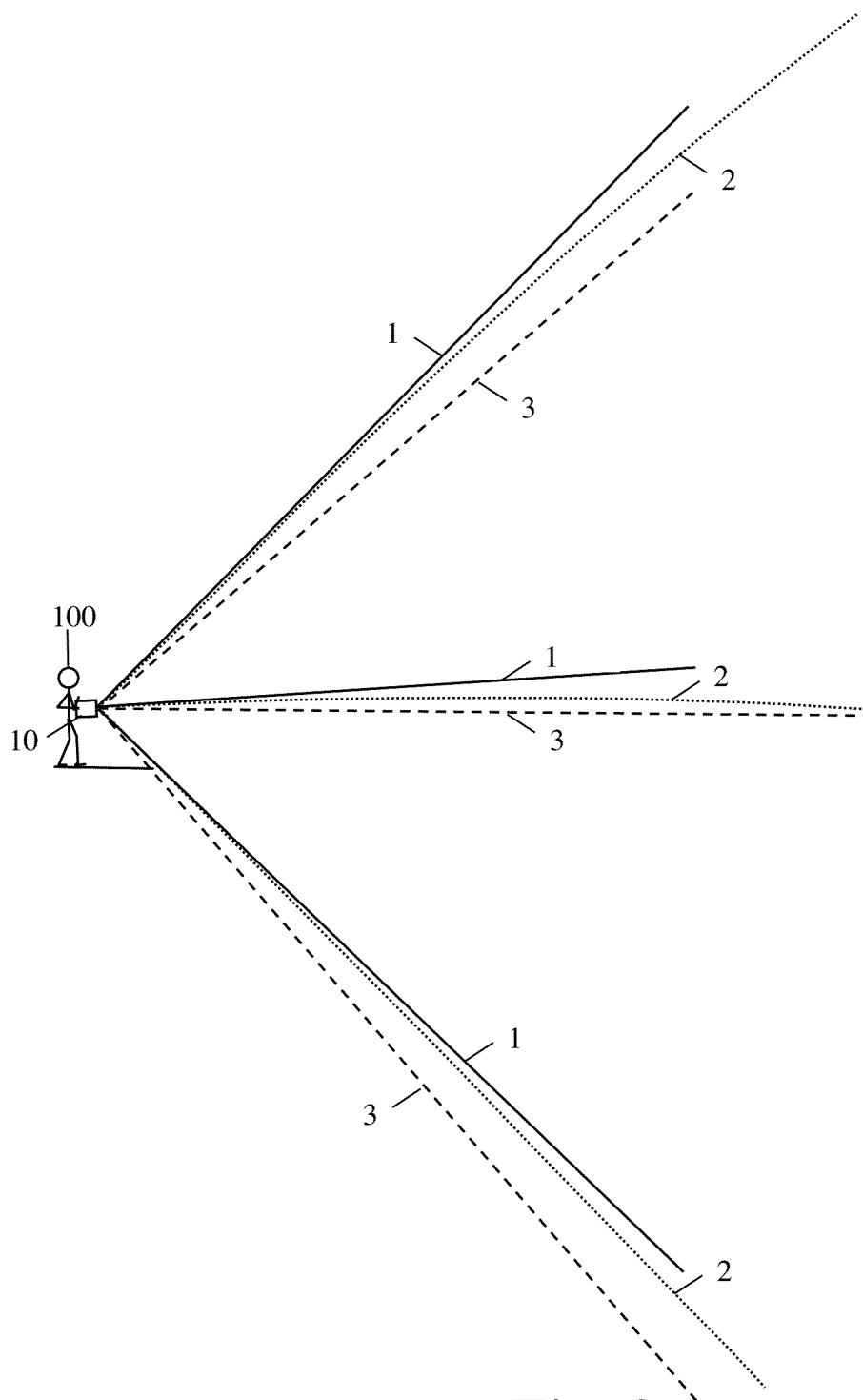


Fig. 8

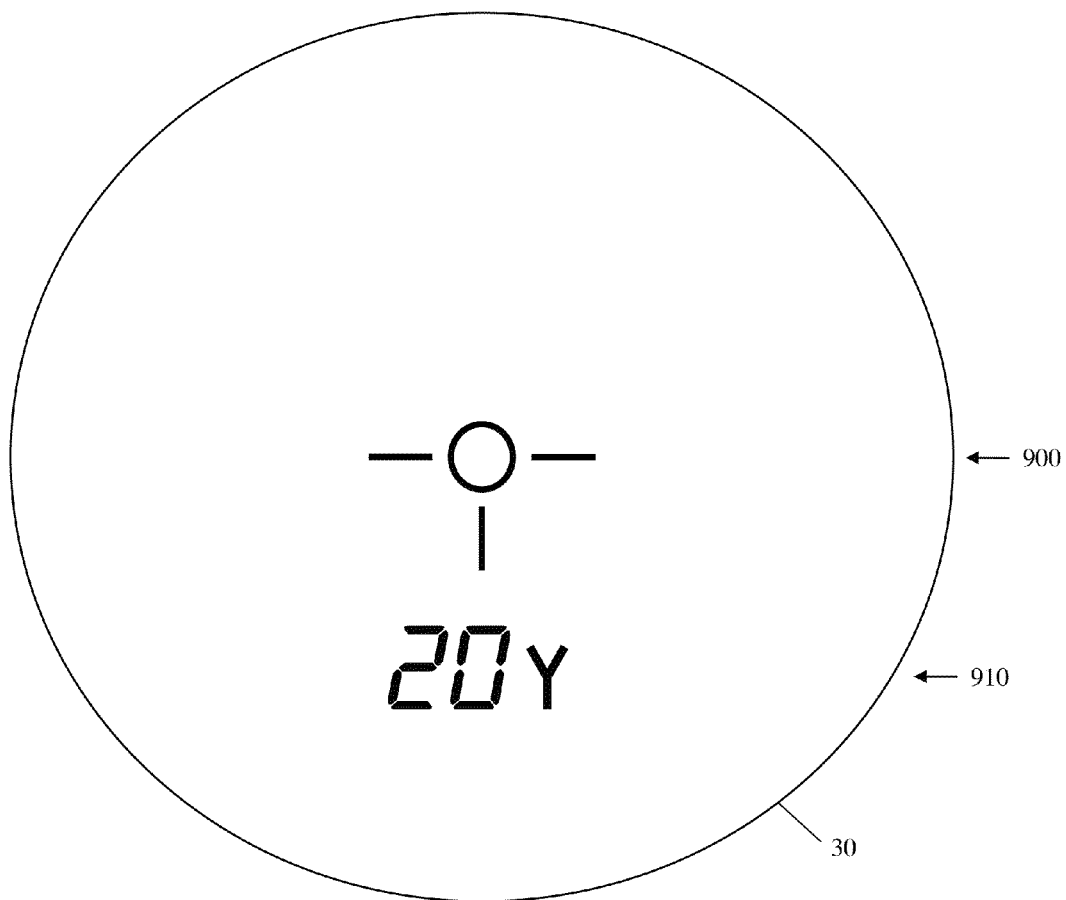


Fig. 9A

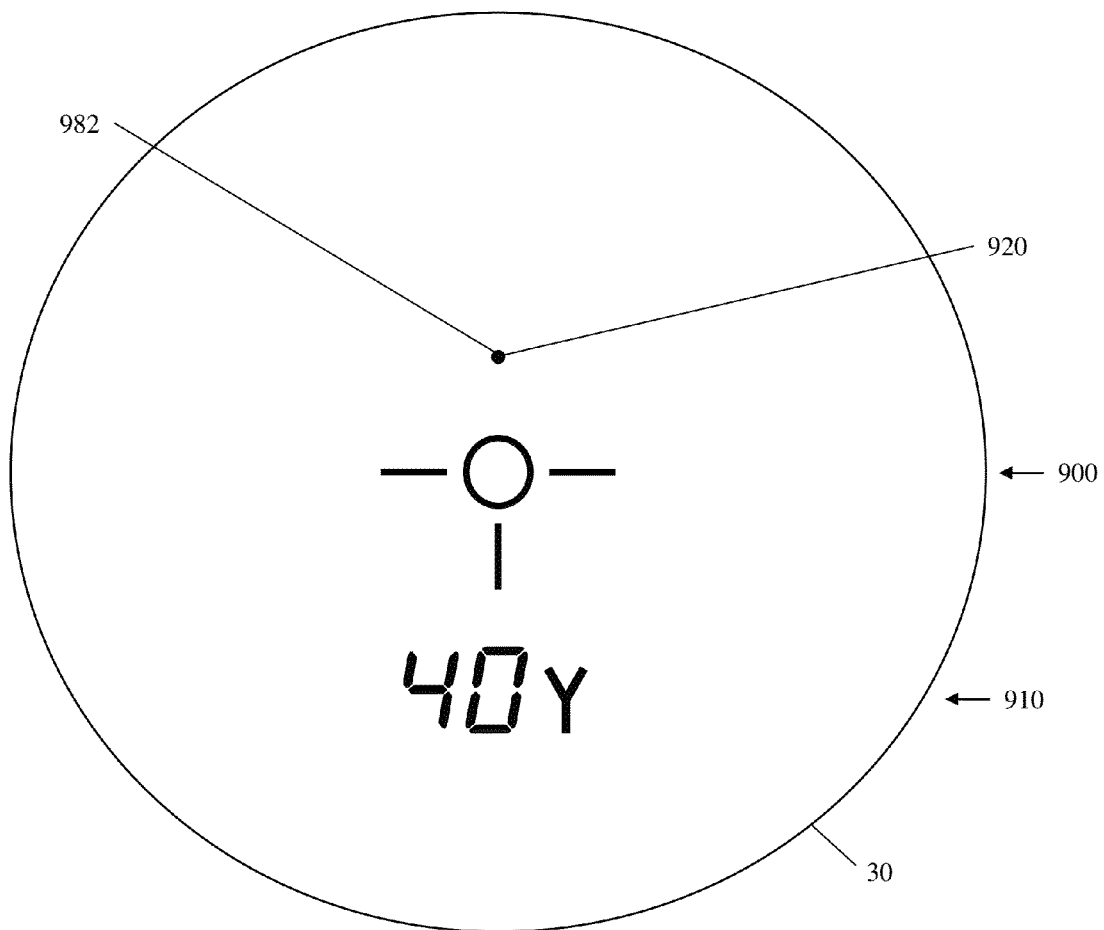


Fig. 9B

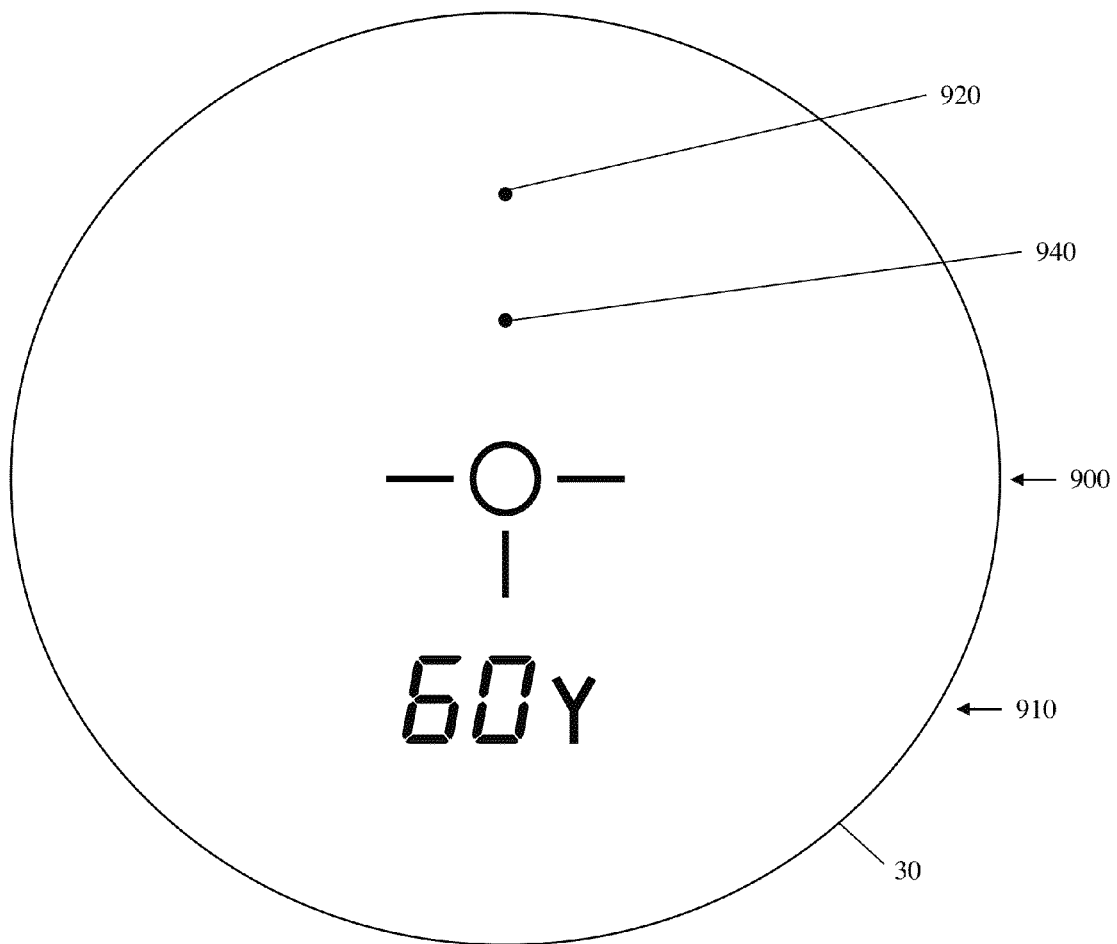


Fig. 9C

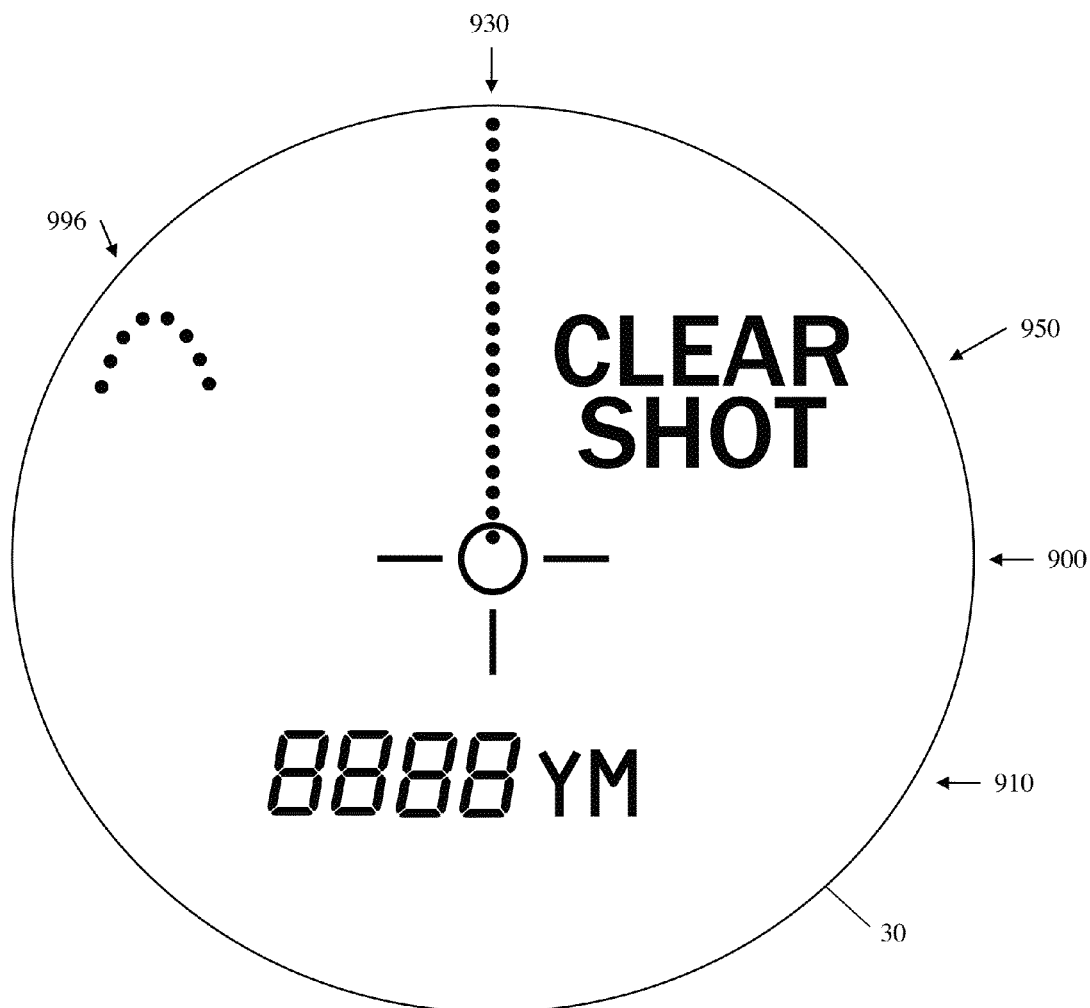


Fig. 10

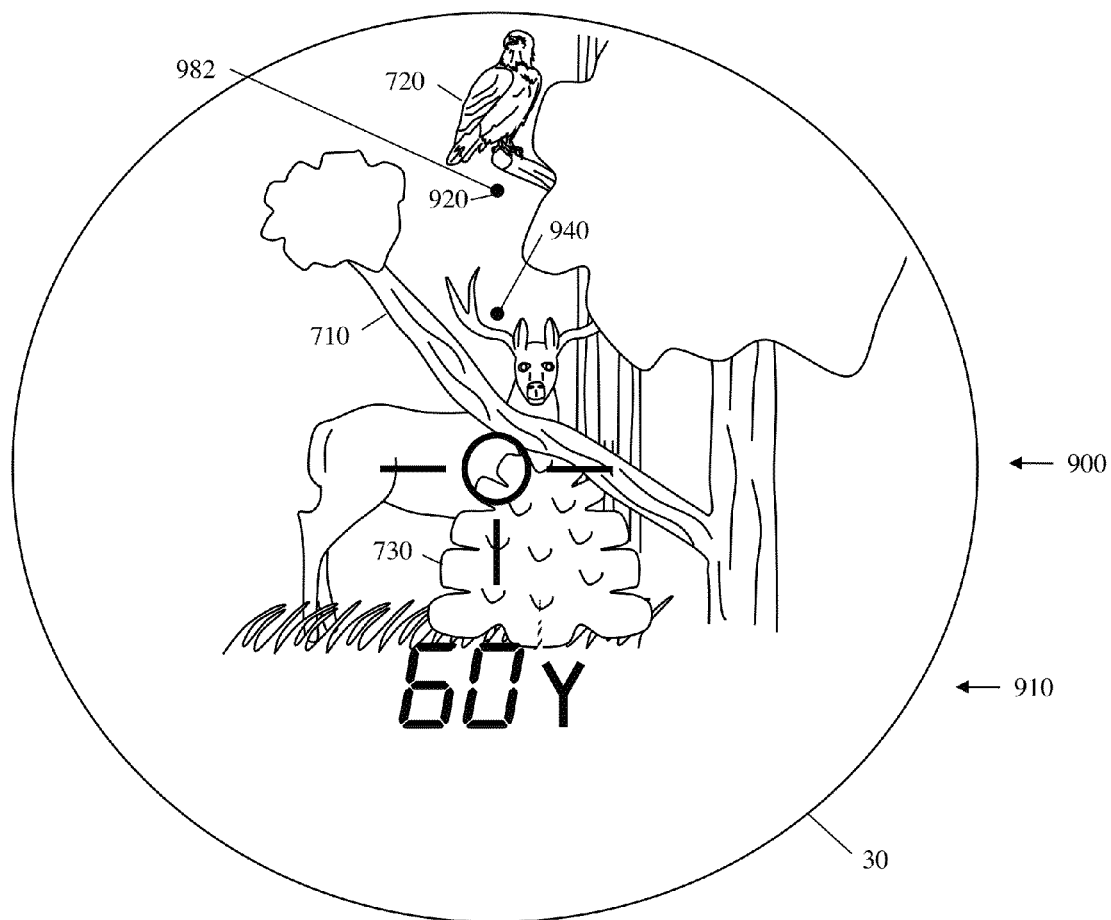


Fig. 11A

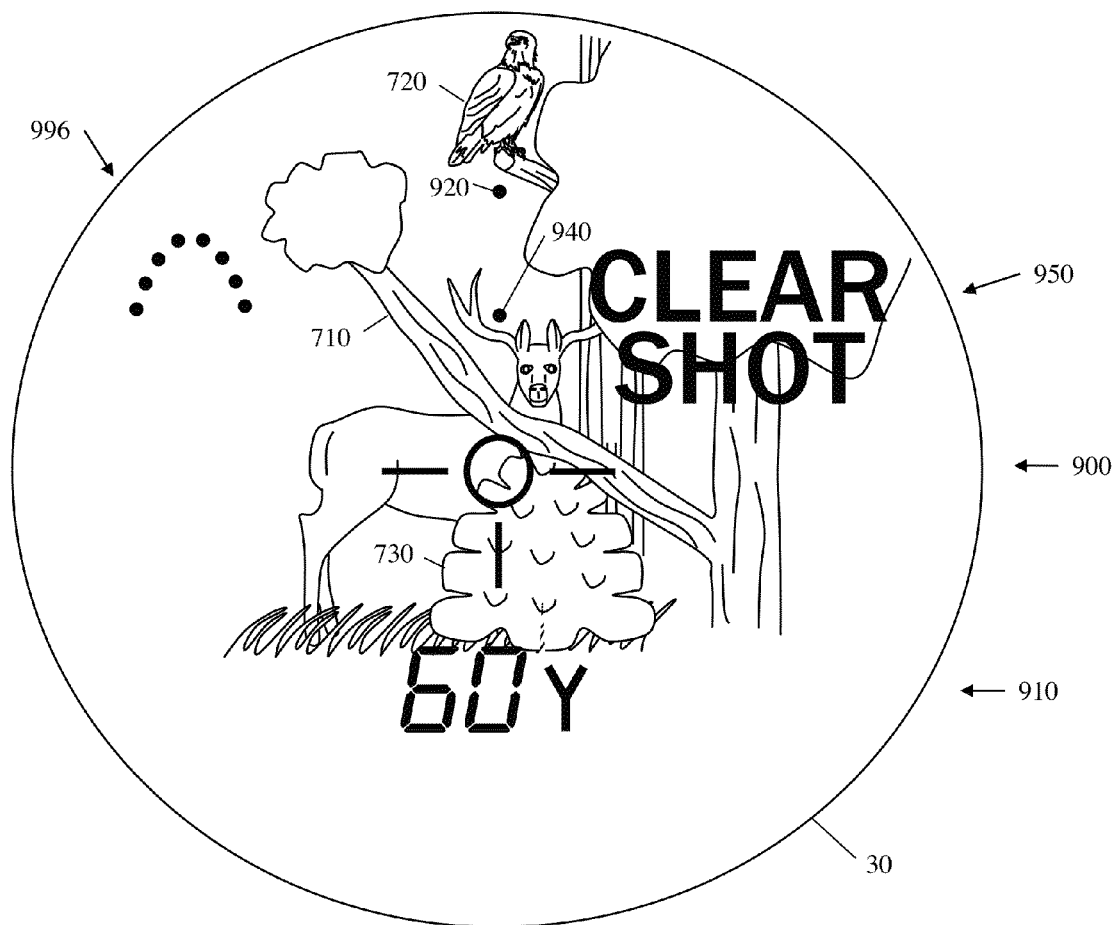


Fig. 11B

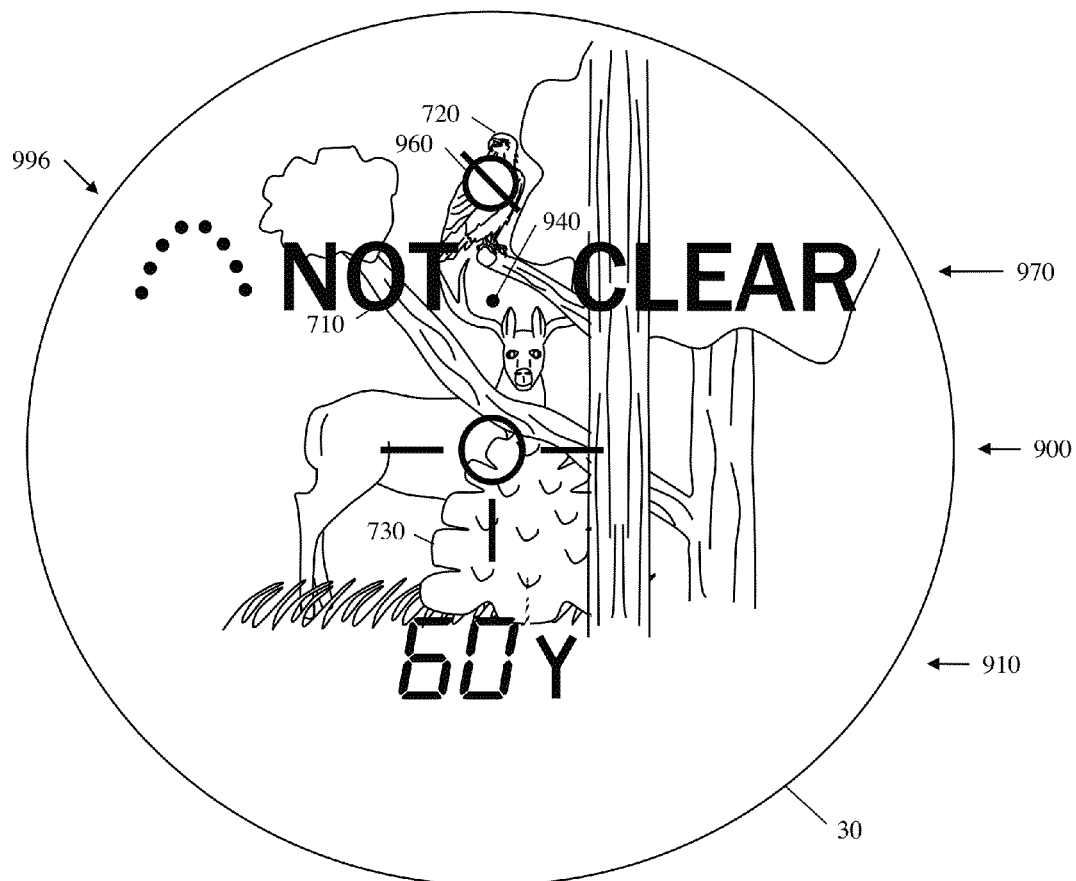


Fig. 11C

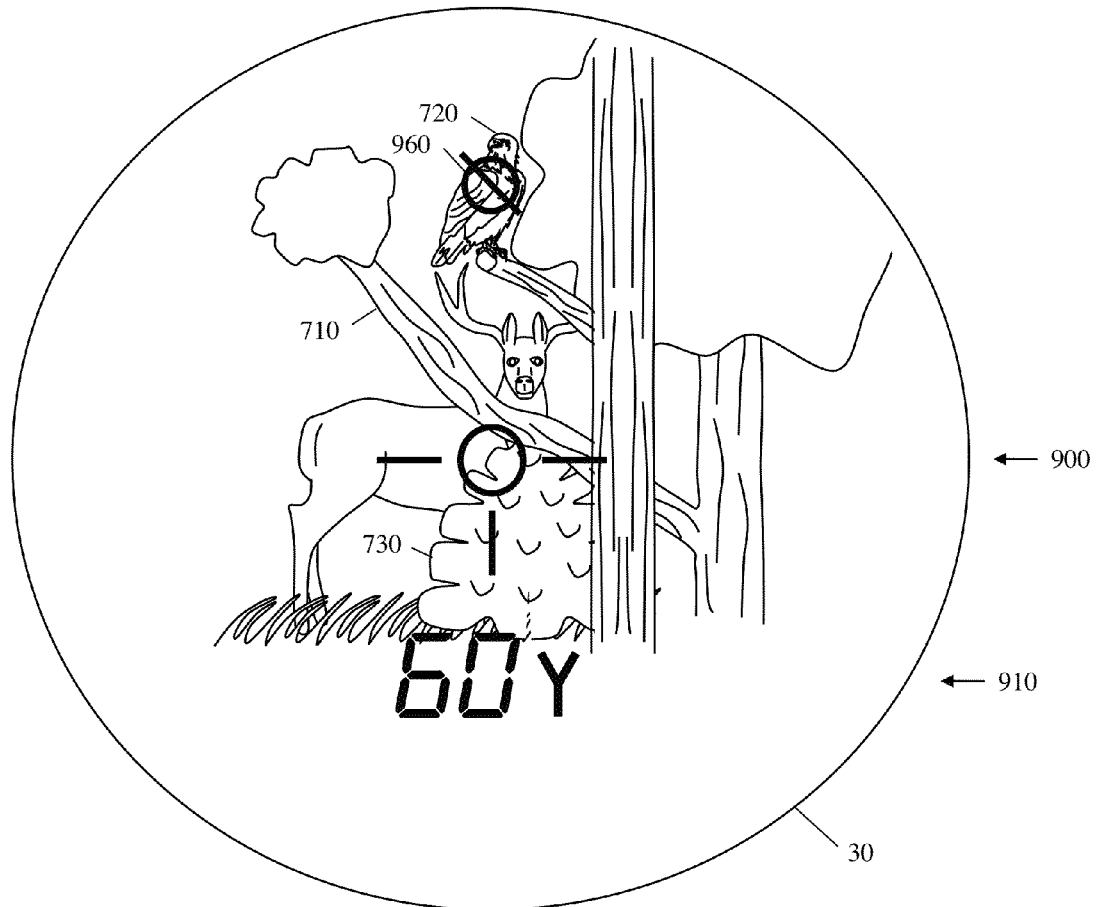


Fig. 11D

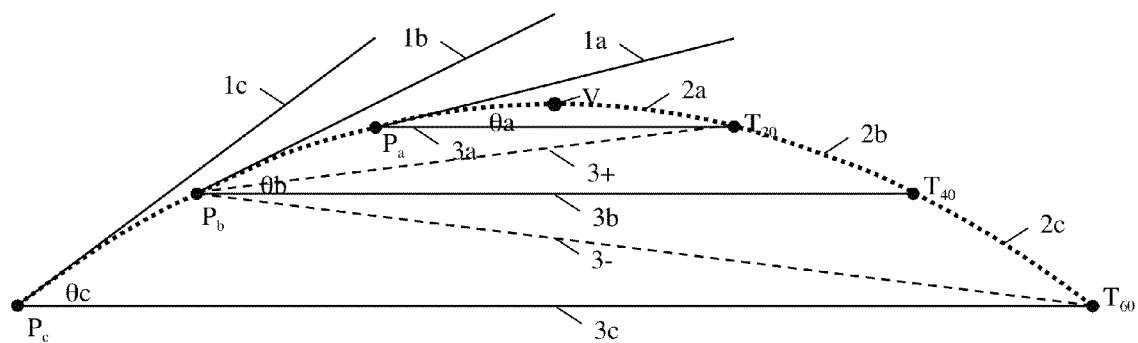


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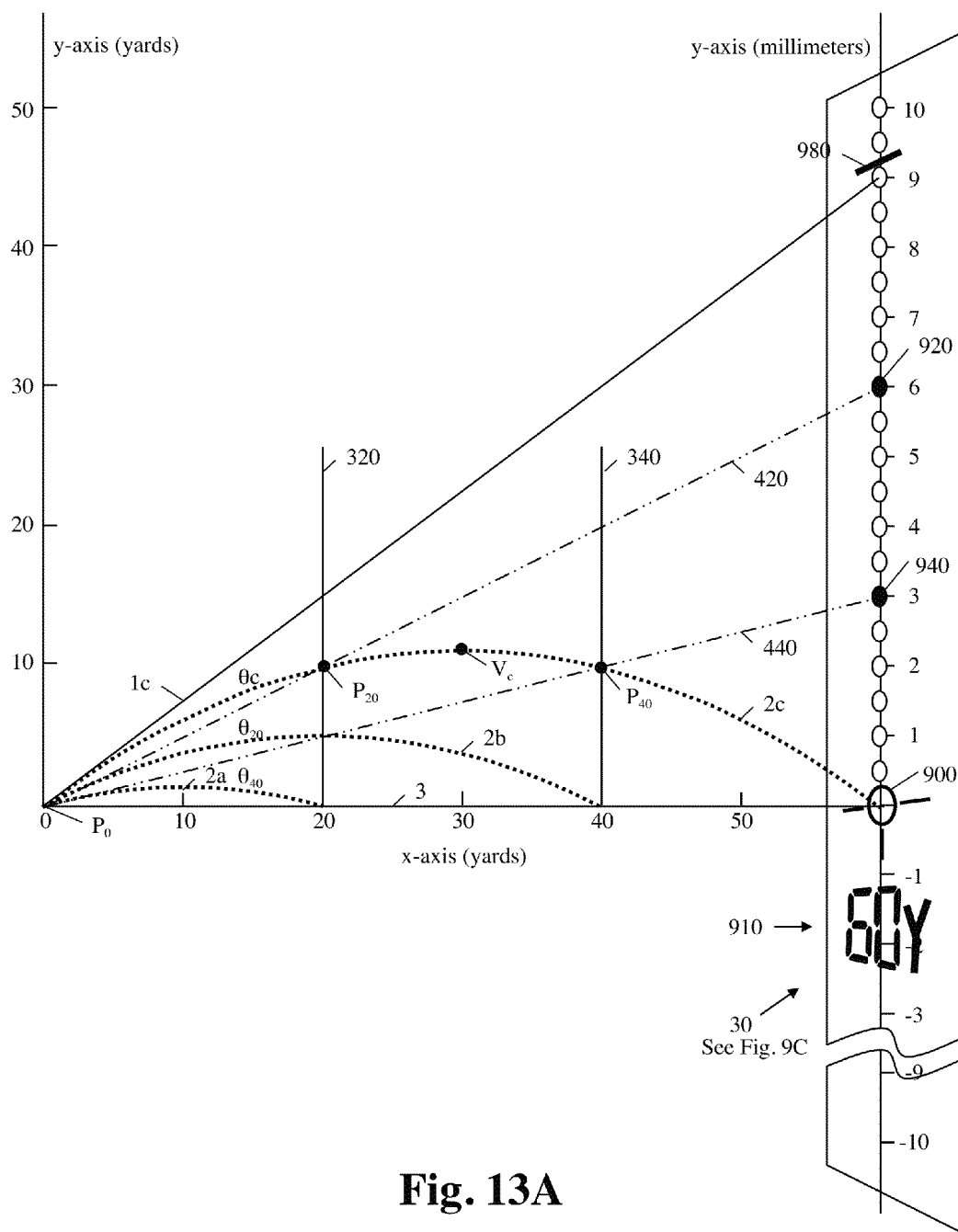


Fig. 13A

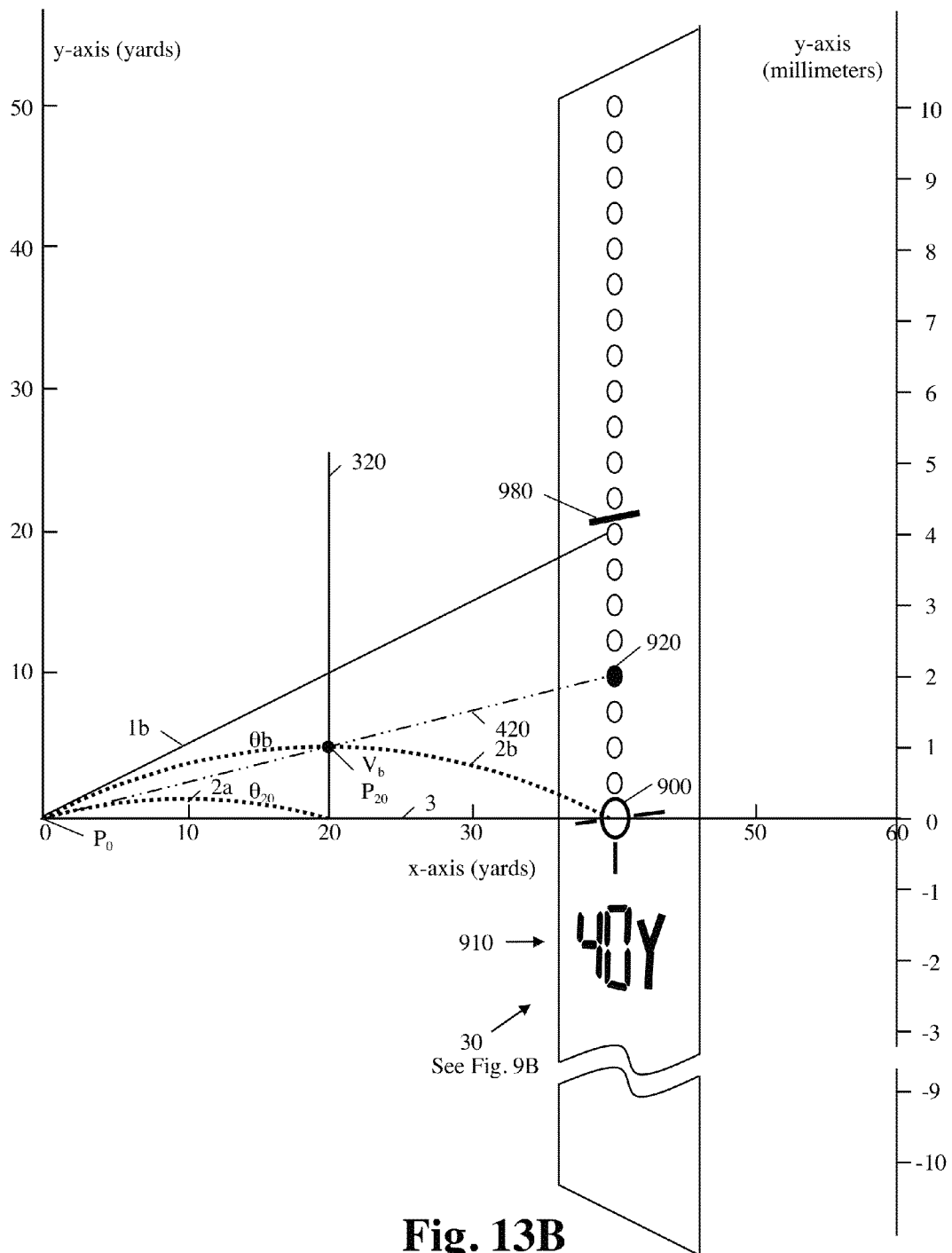


Fig. 13B

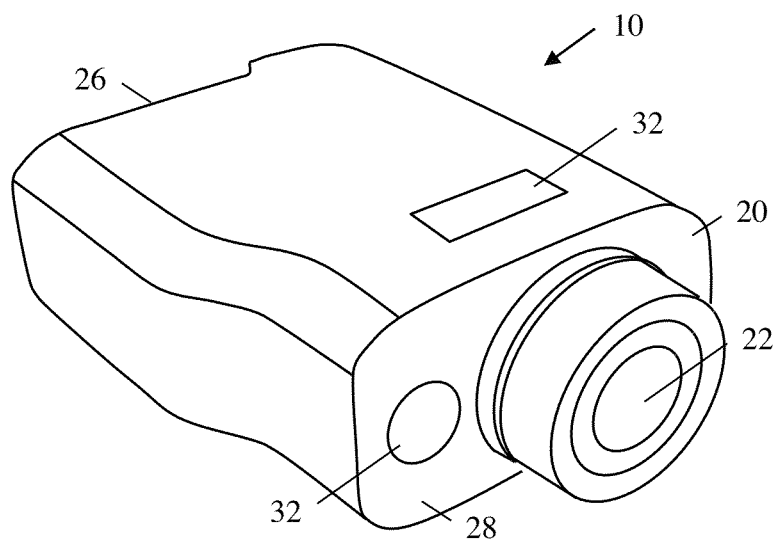


Fig. 14

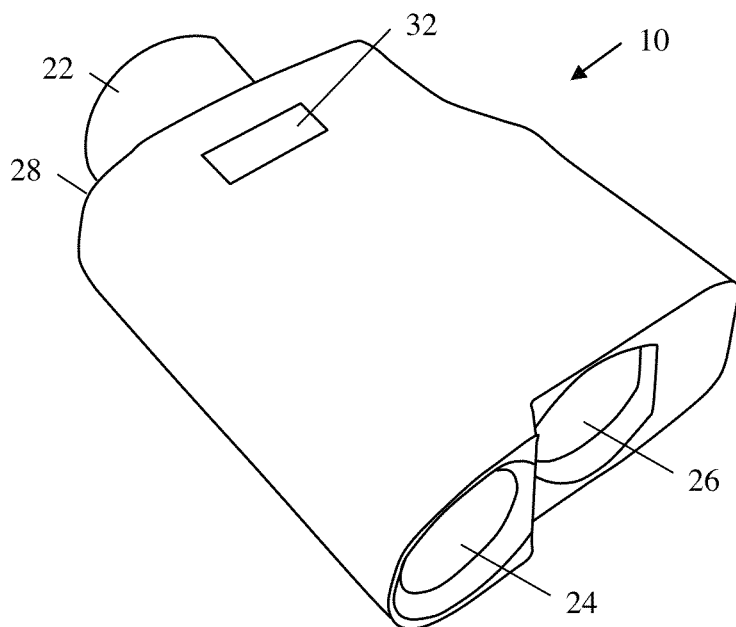
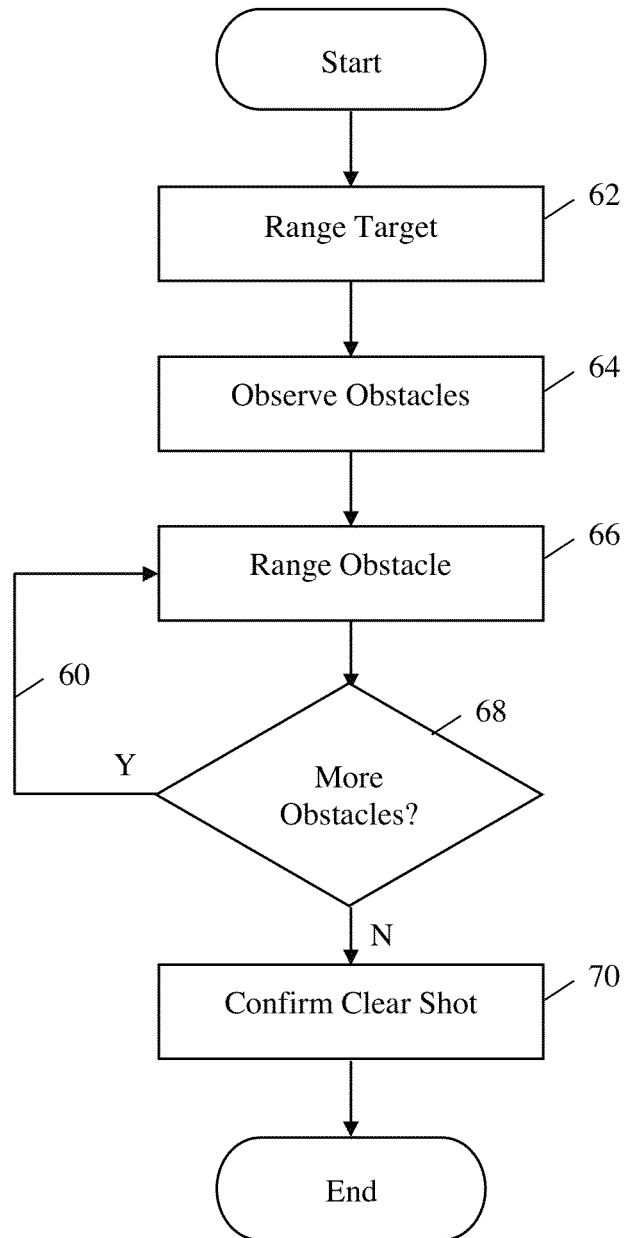
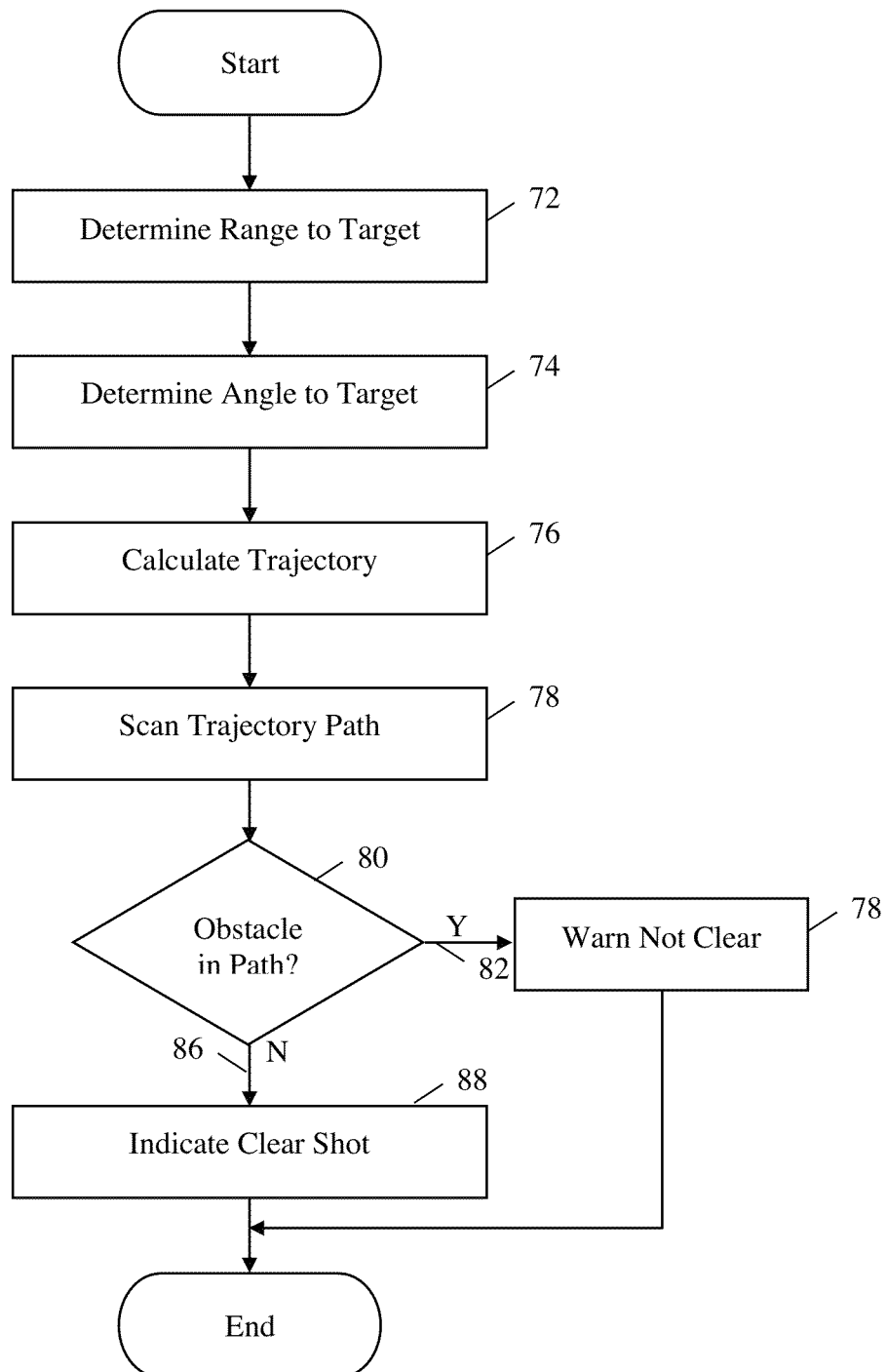
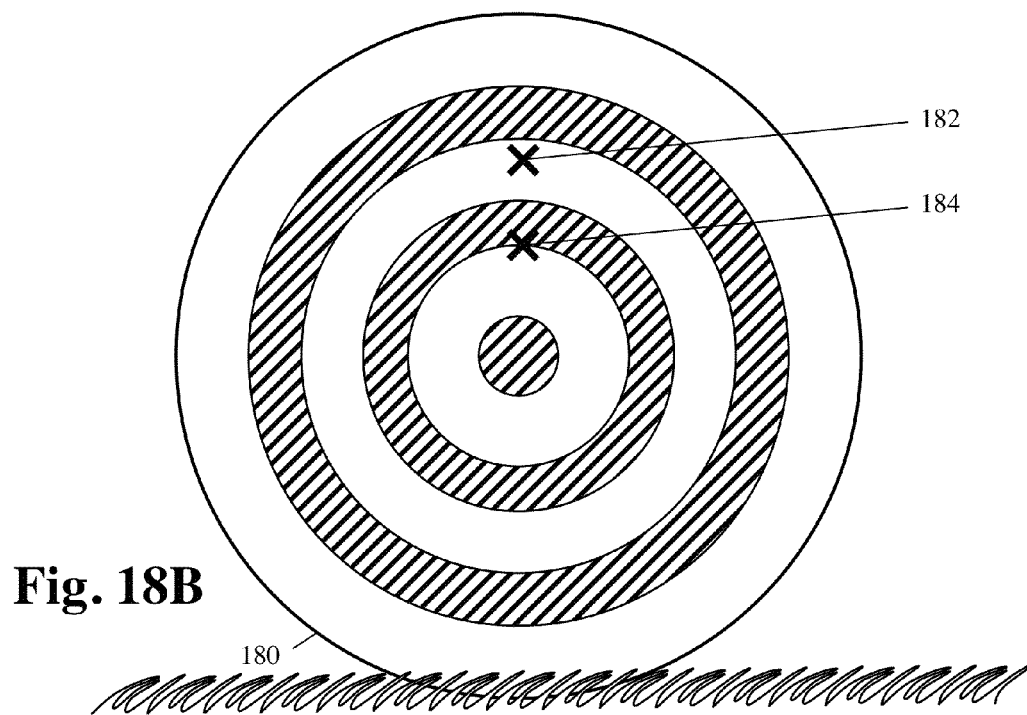
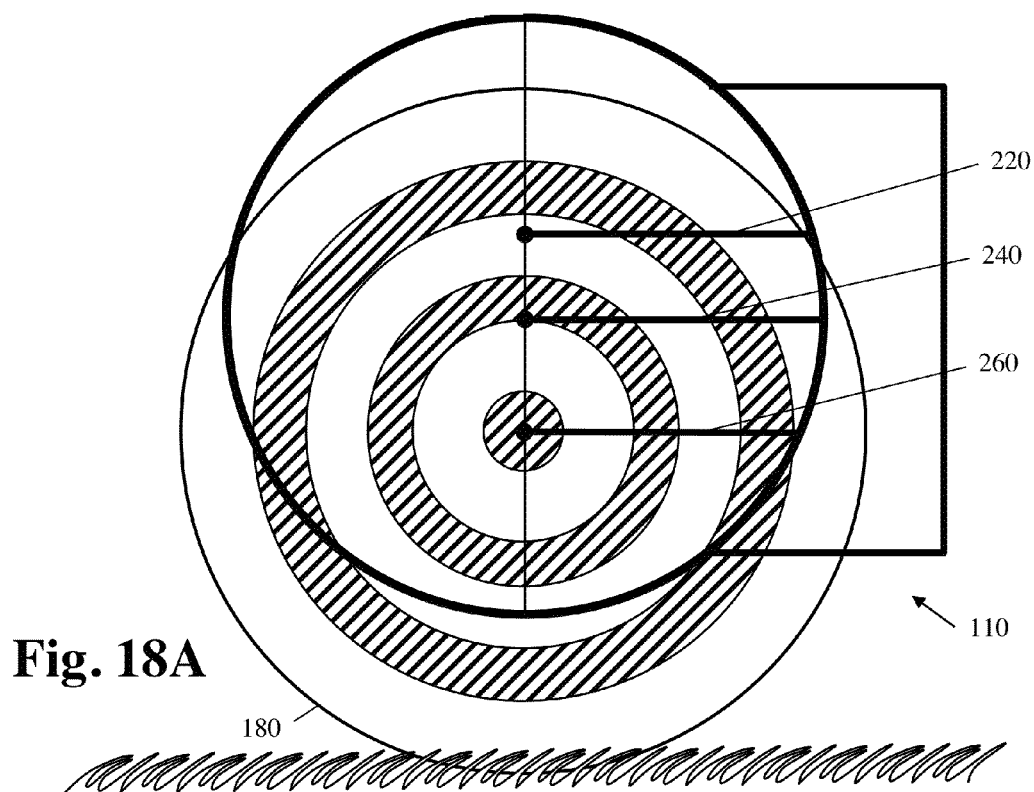


Fig. 15

**Fig. 16**

**Fig. 17**



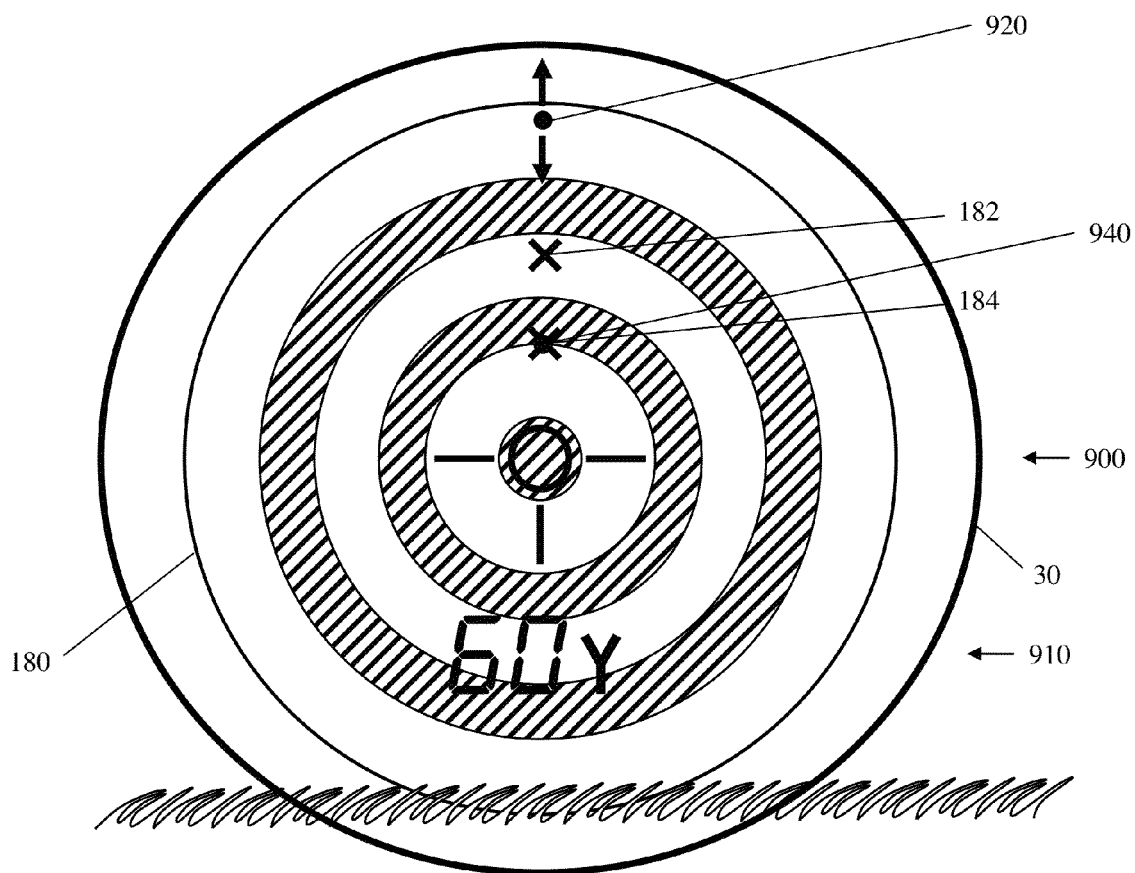


Fig. 18C

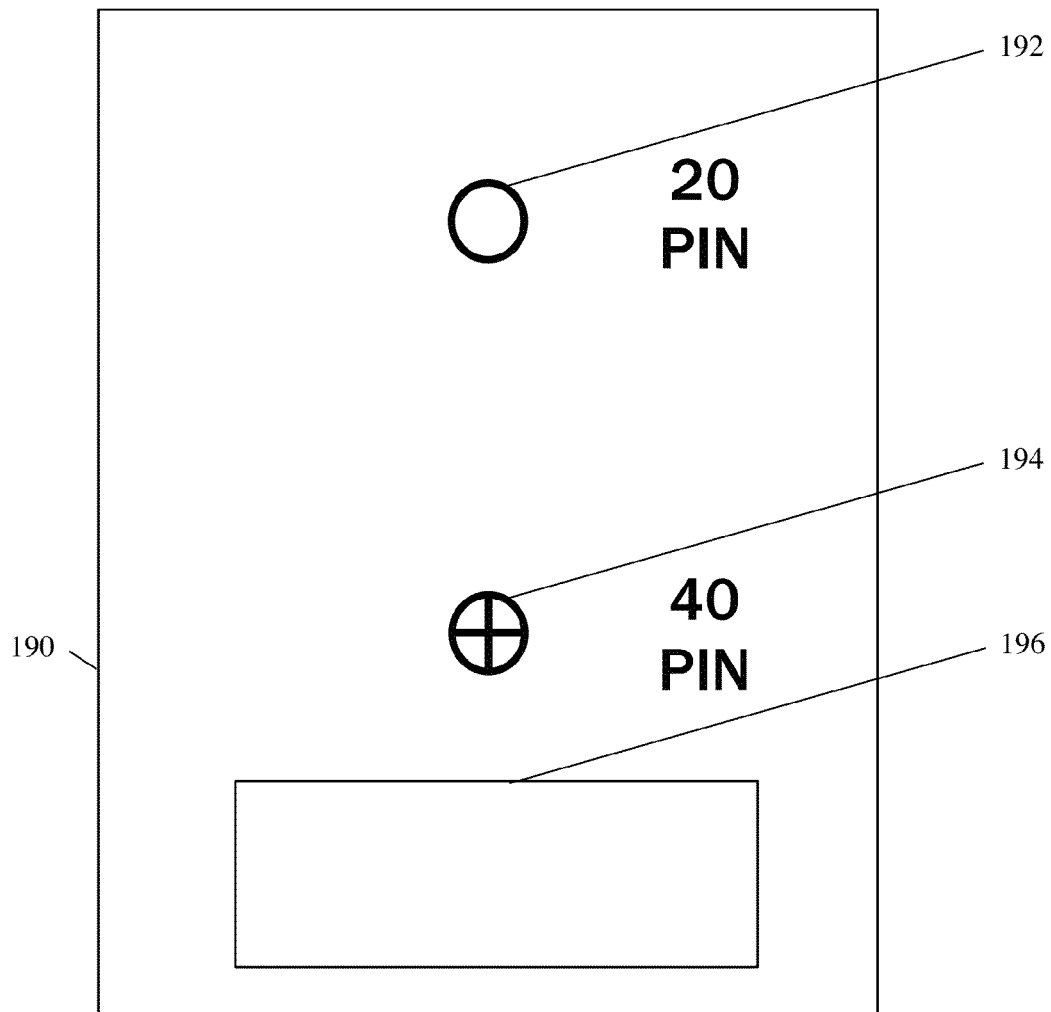


Fig. 18D

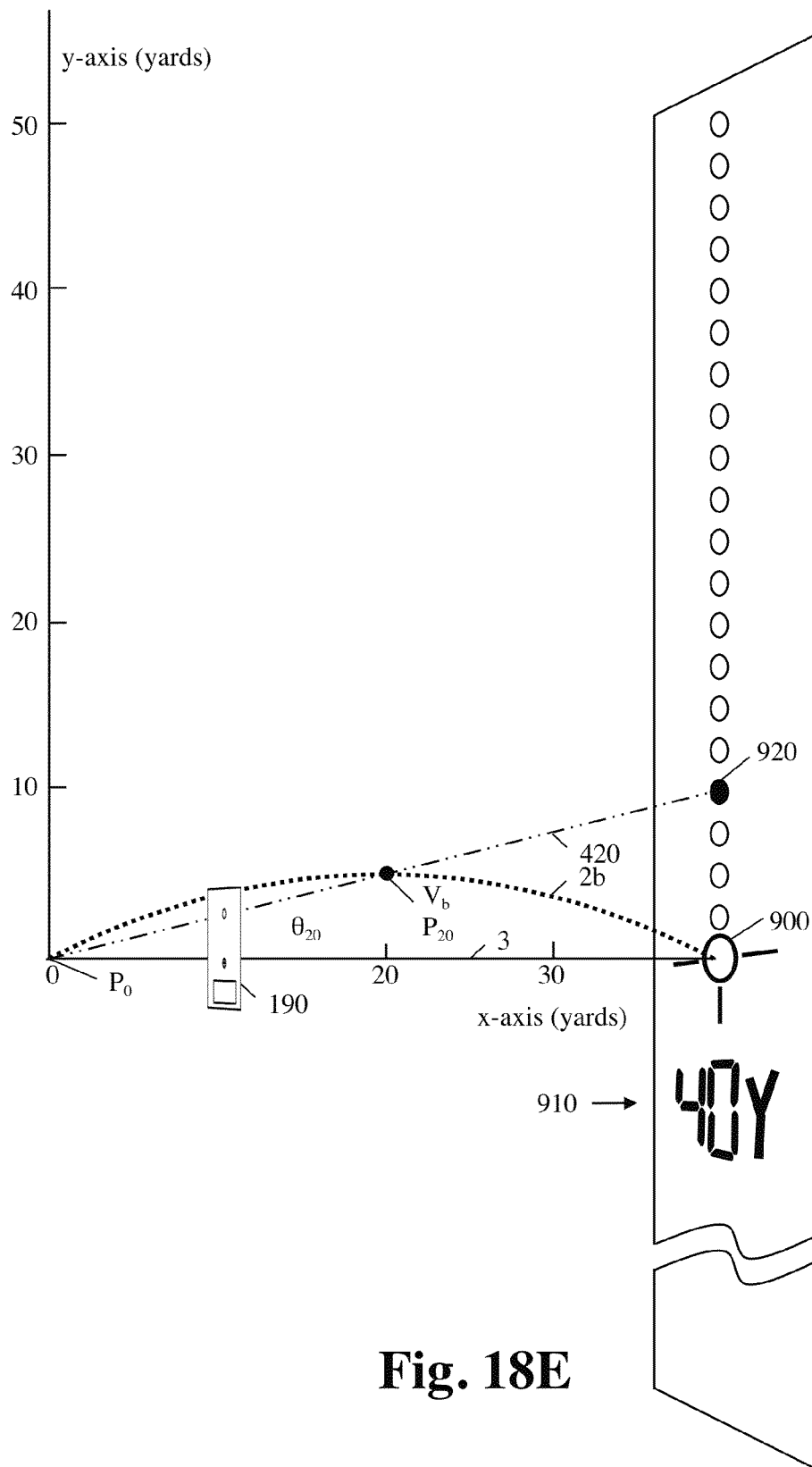


Fig. 18E

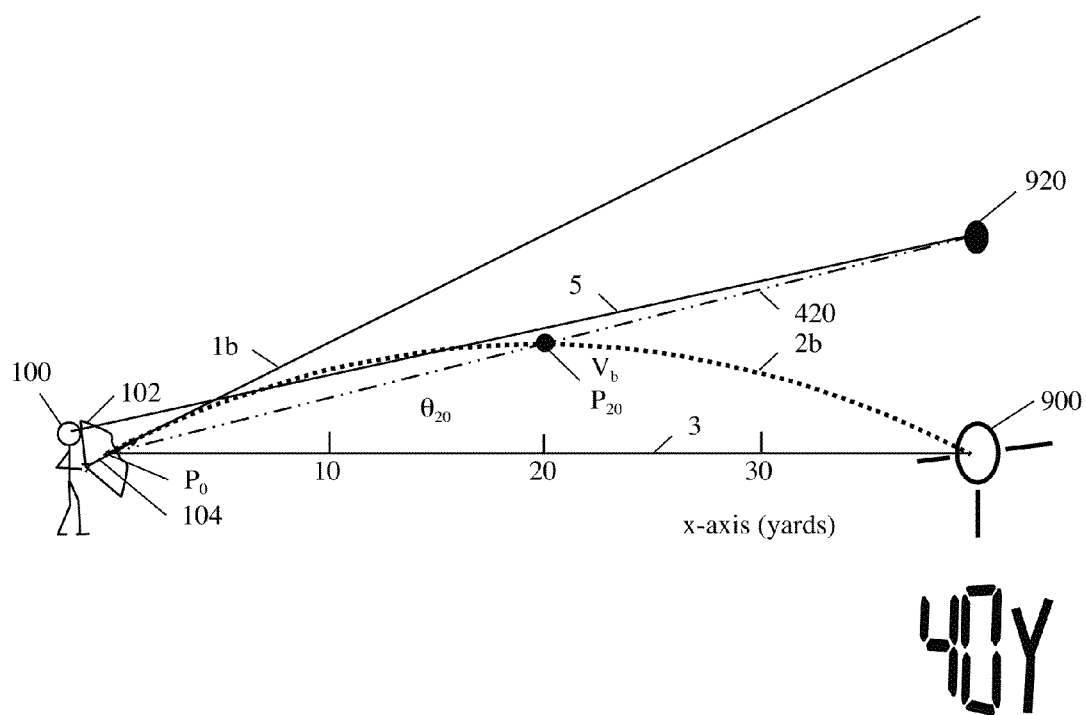


Fig. 18F

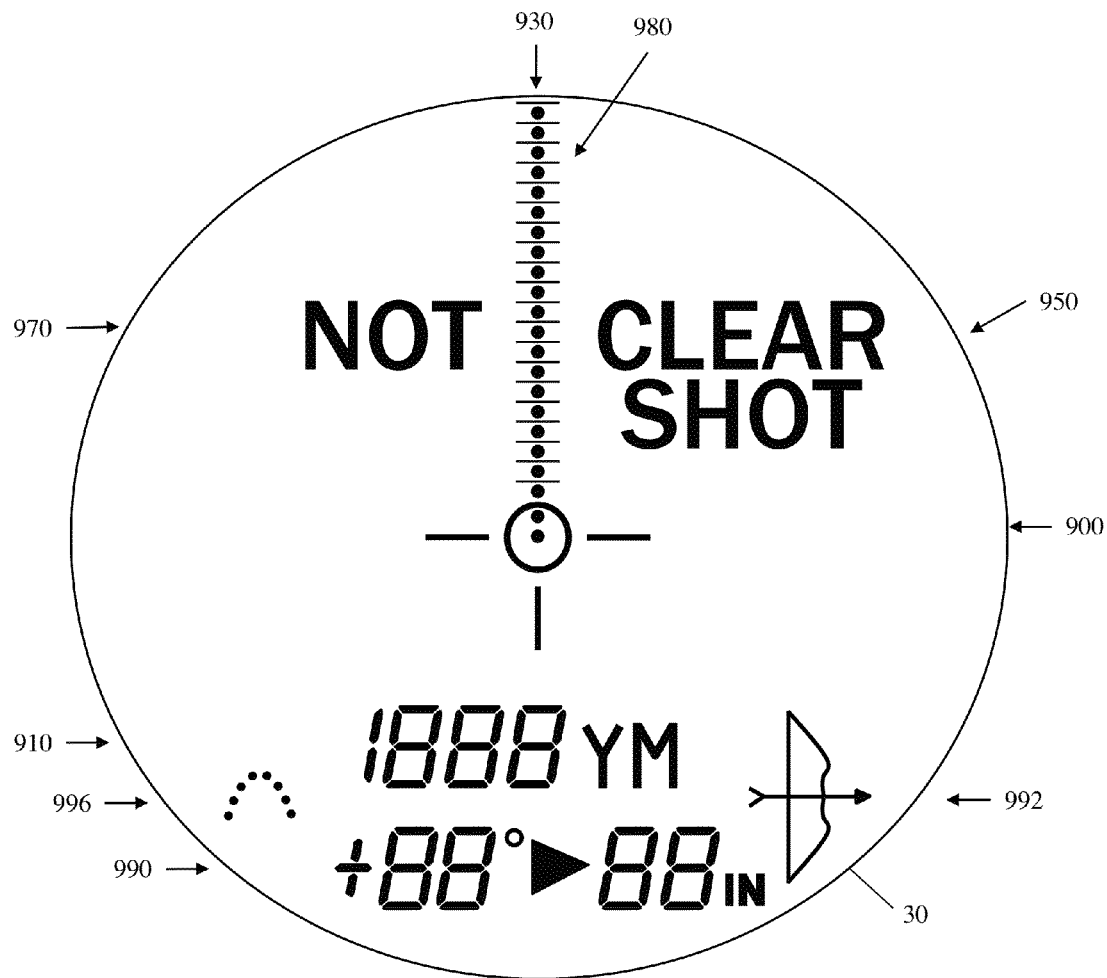


Fig. 19A

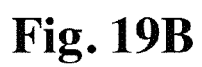


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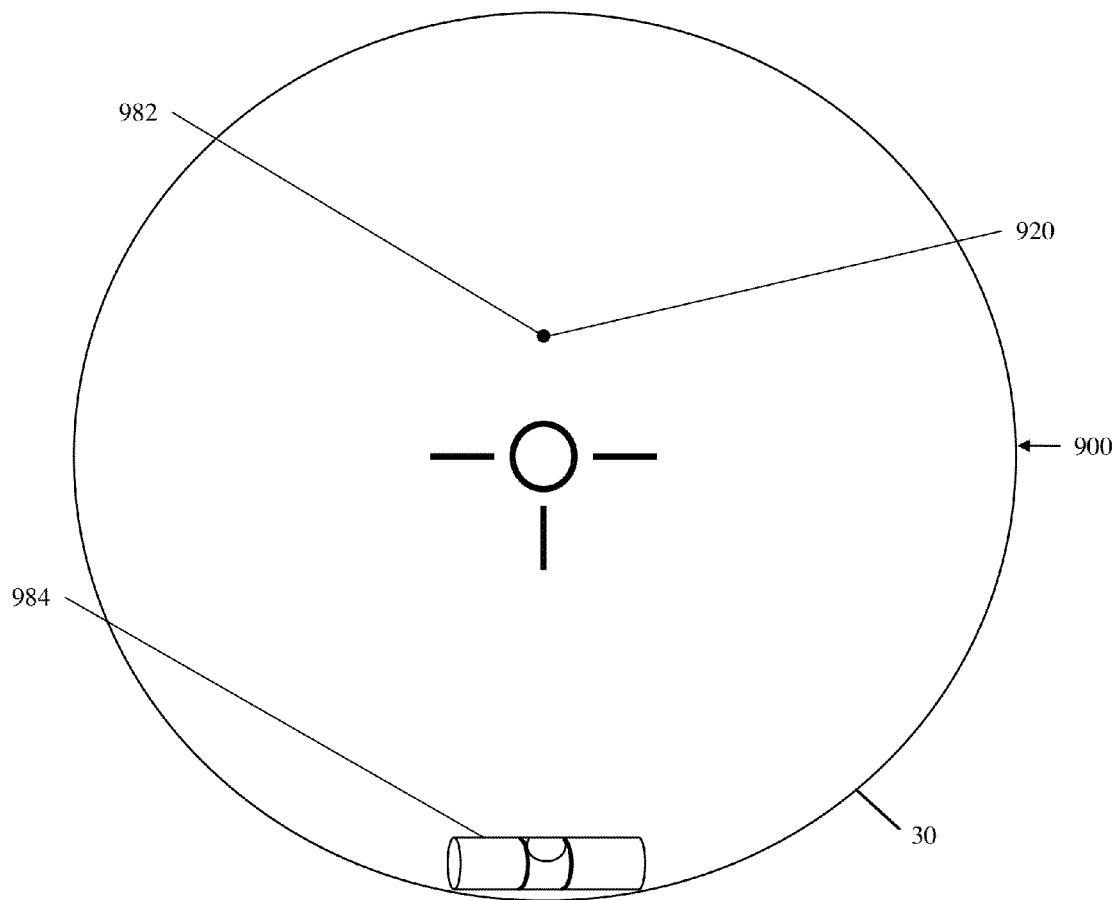


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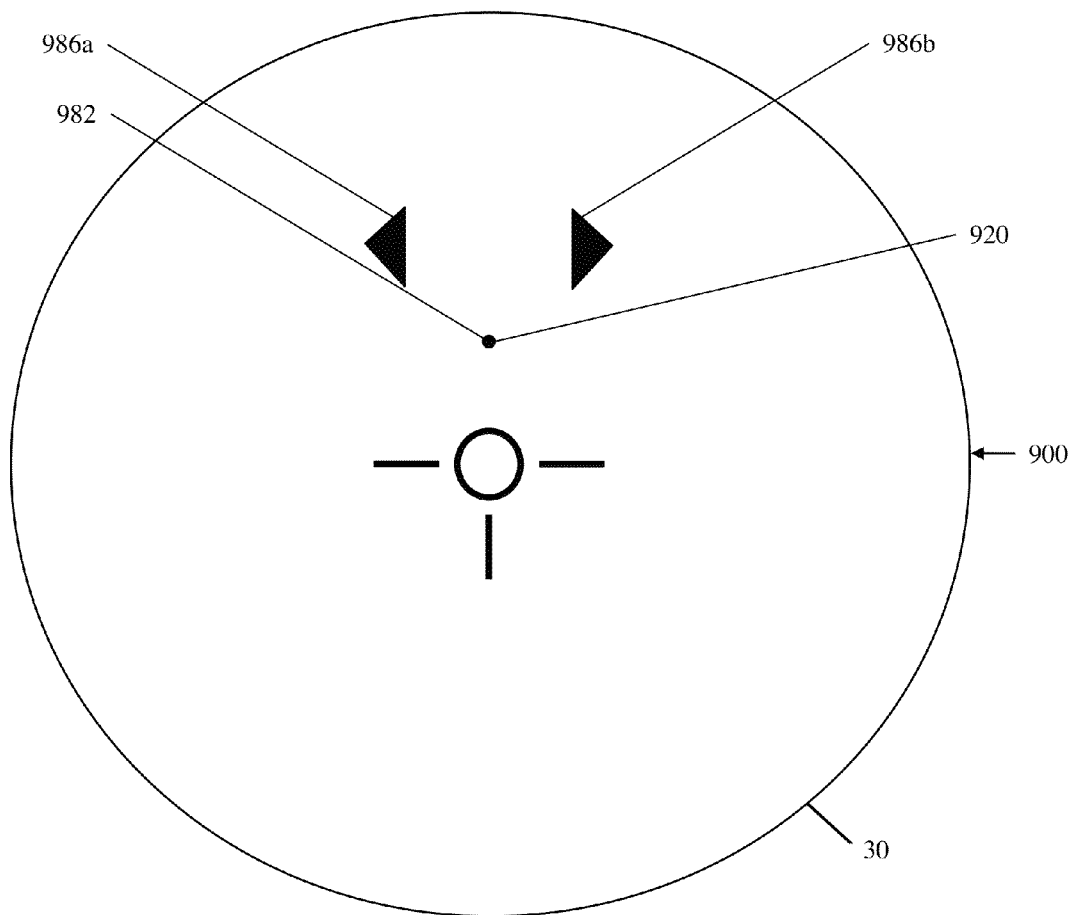


Fig. 19D

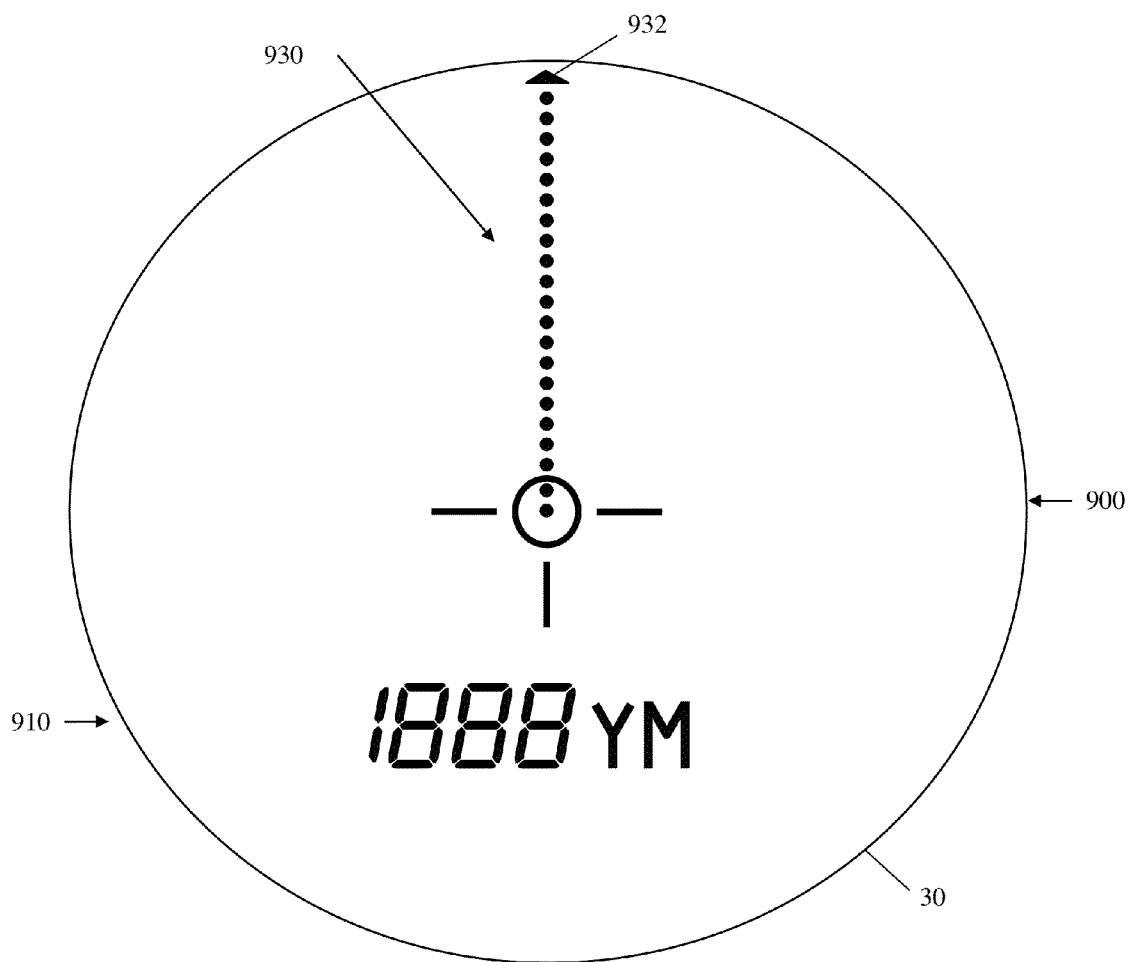


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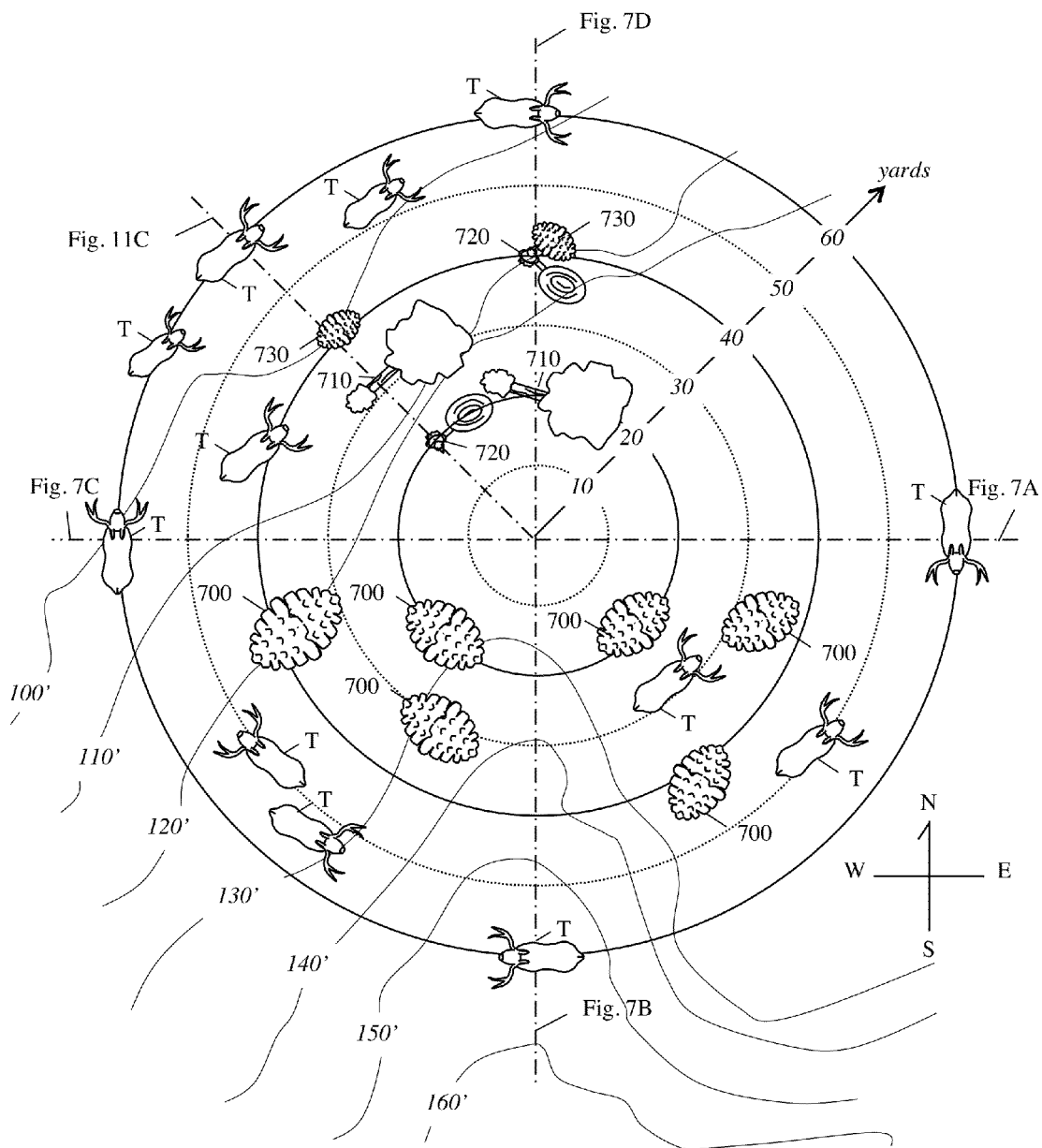


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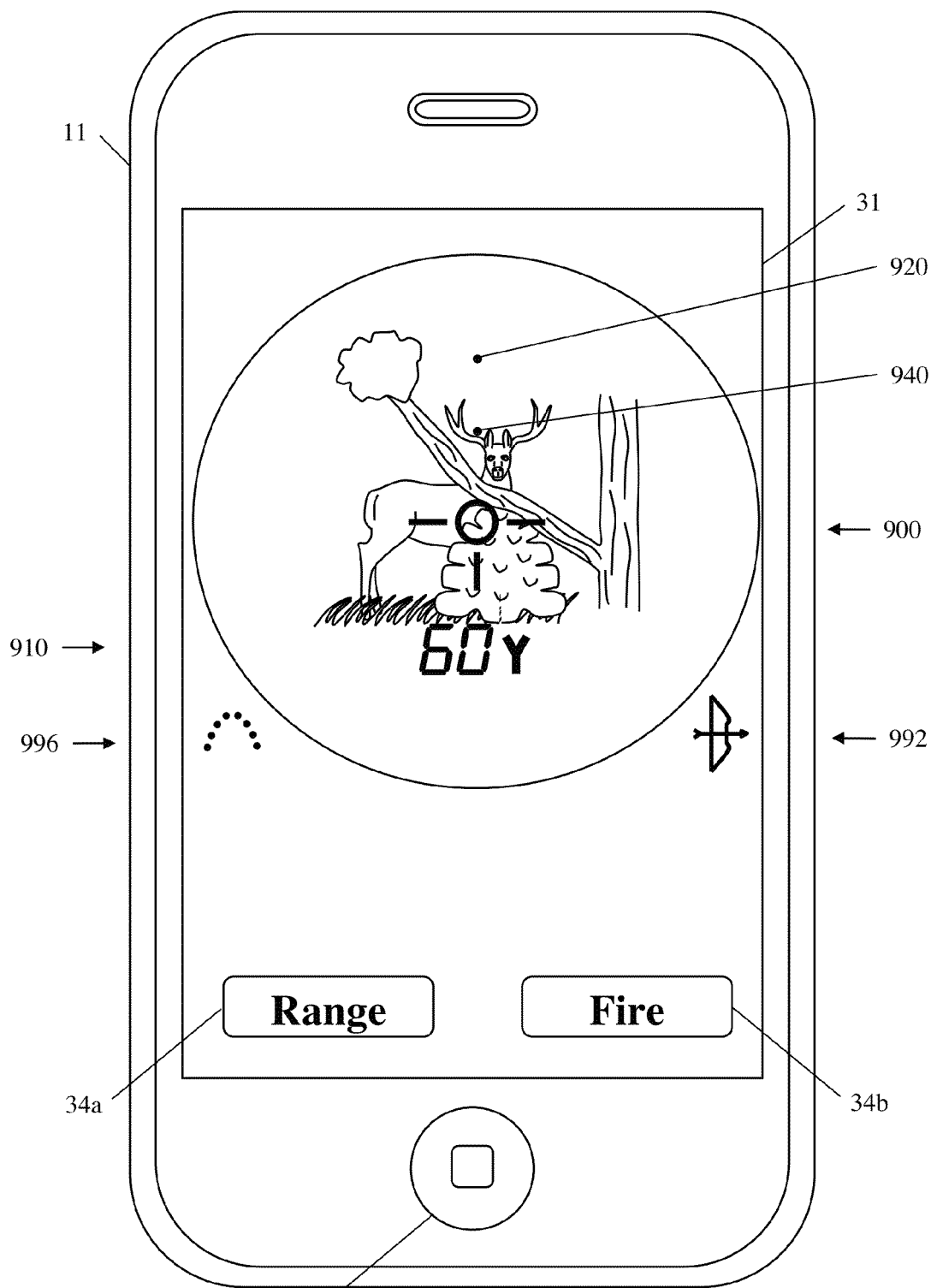


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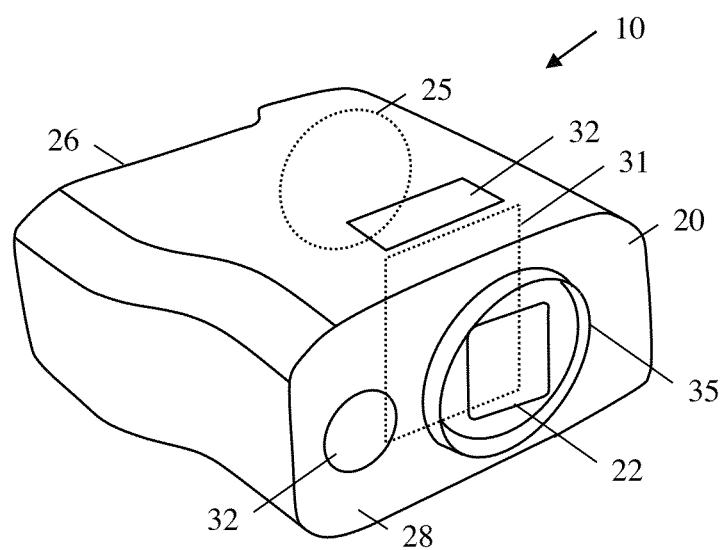


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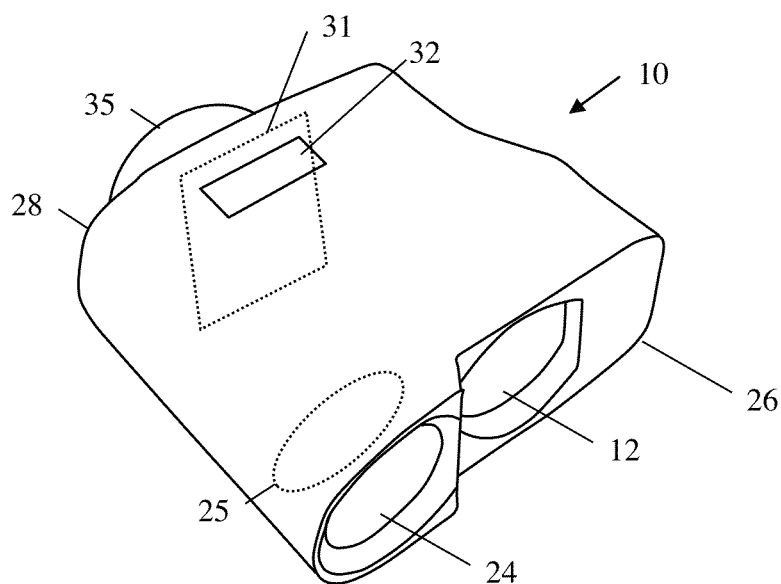


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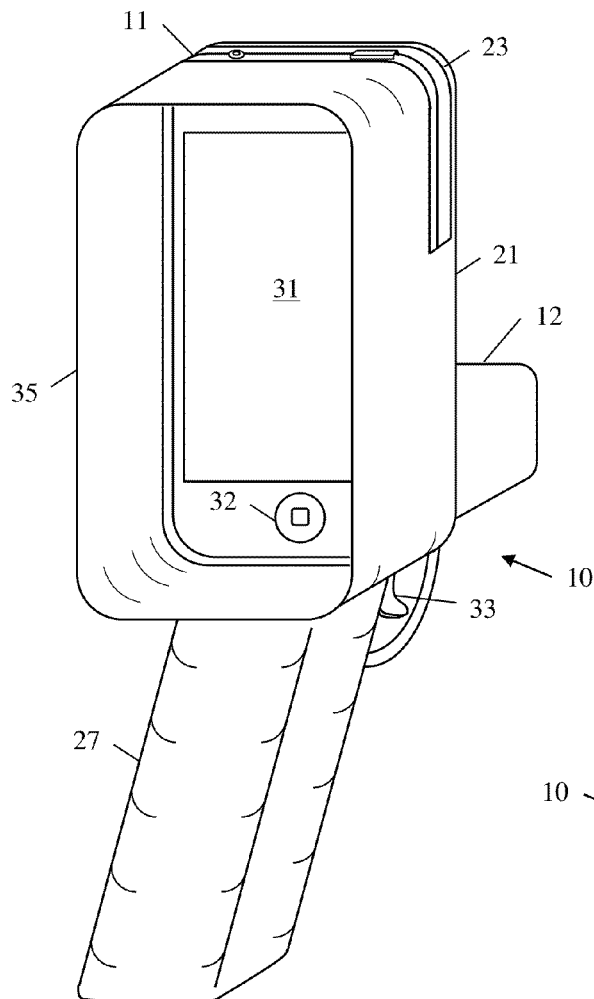


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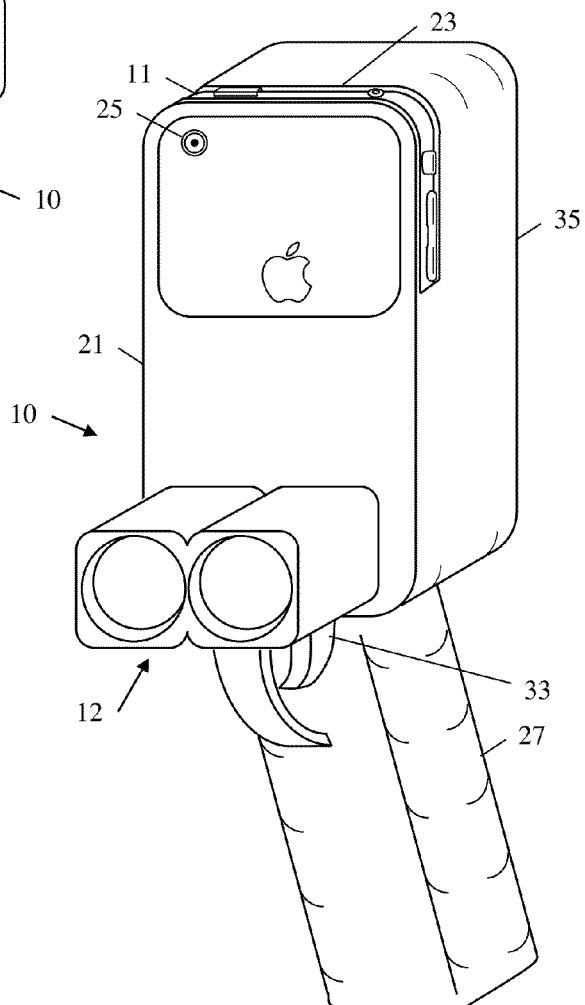


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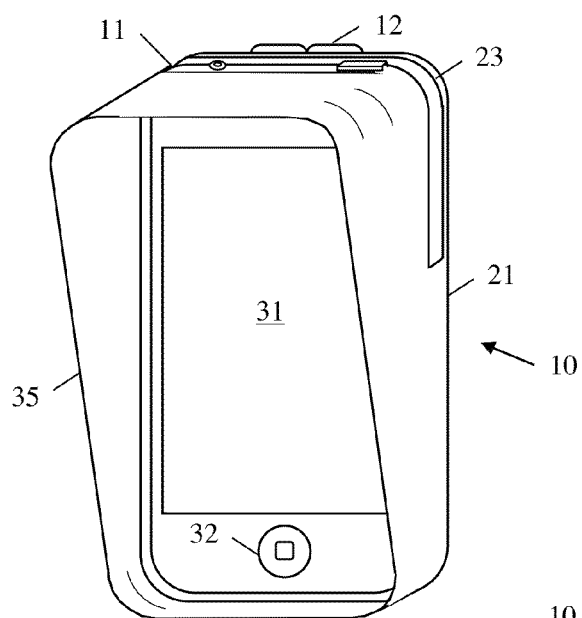


Fig. 26

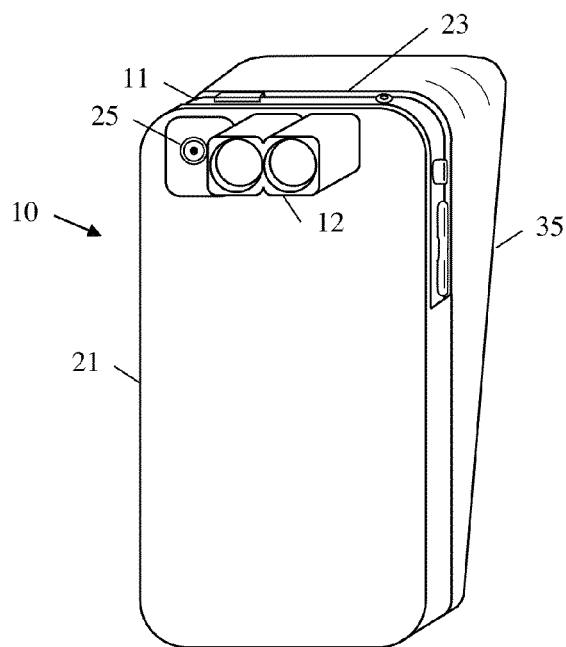


Fig. 27

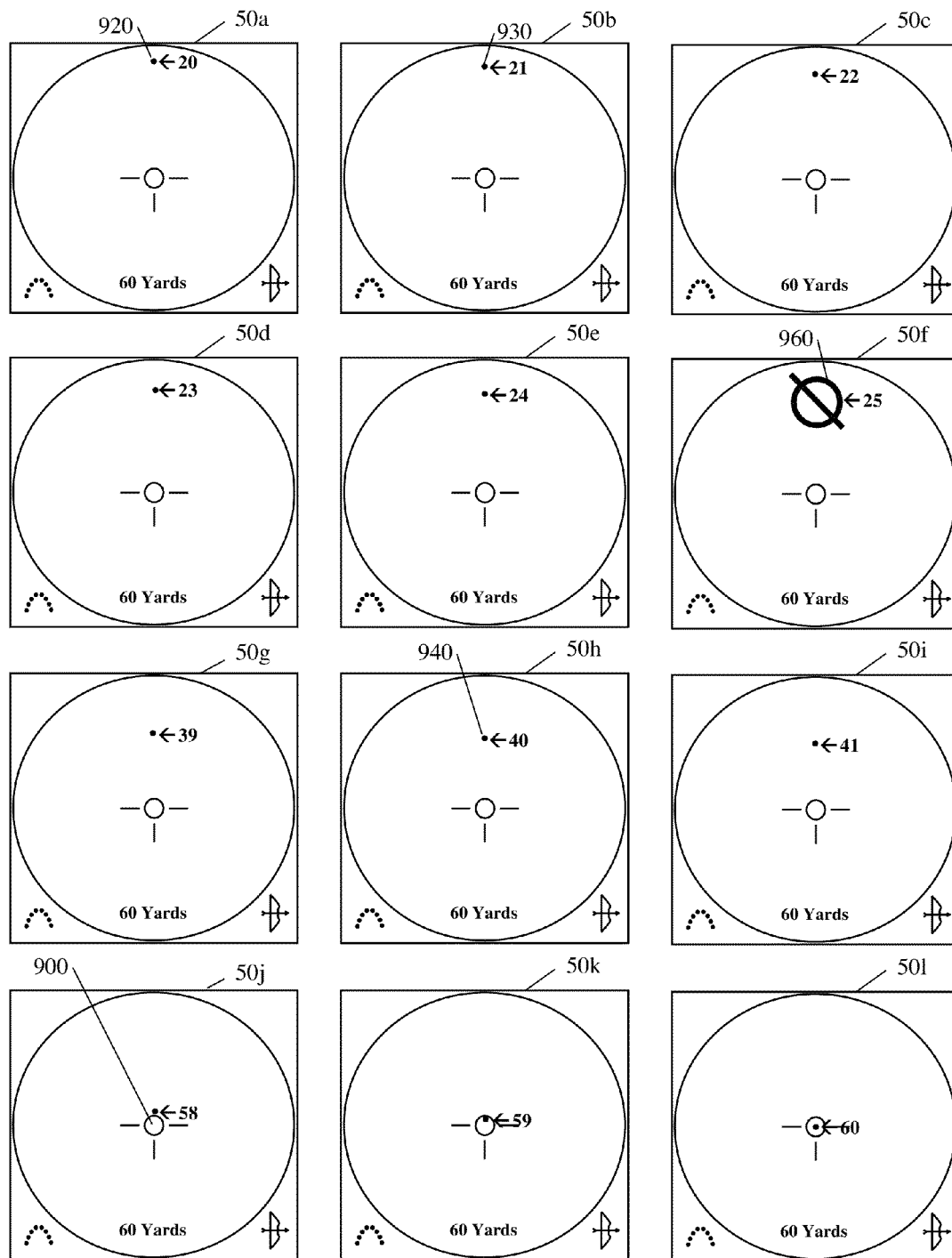


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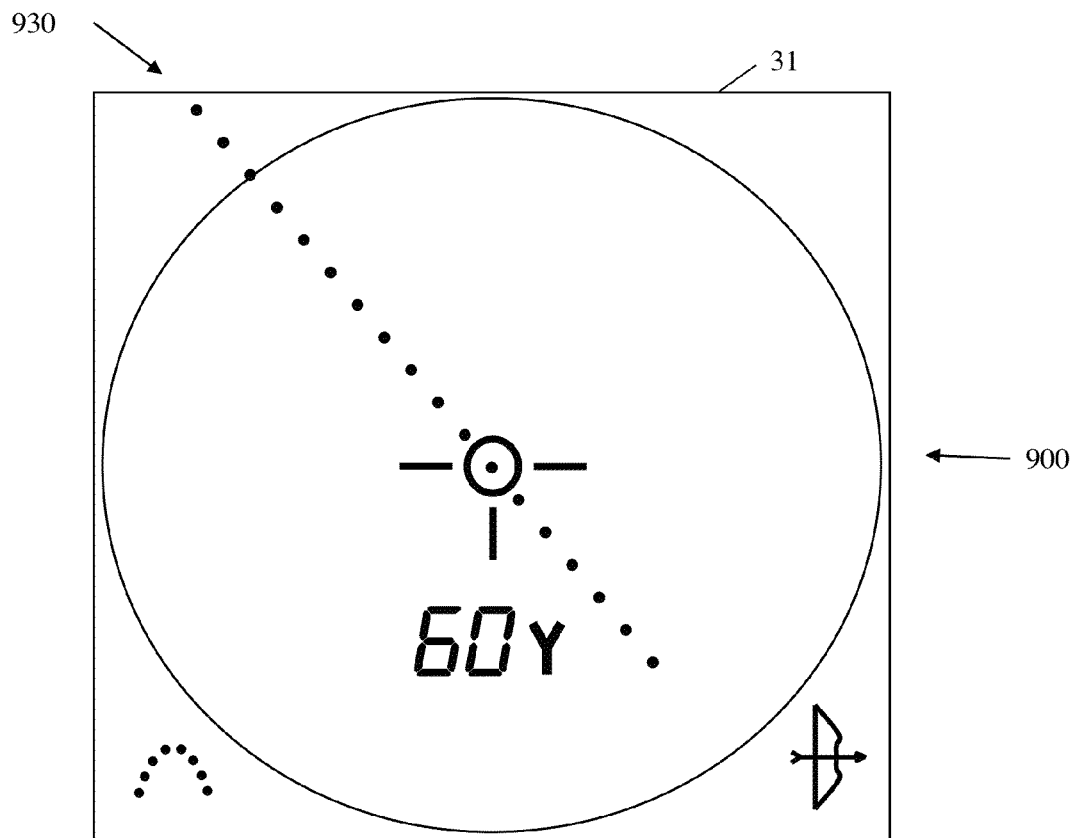


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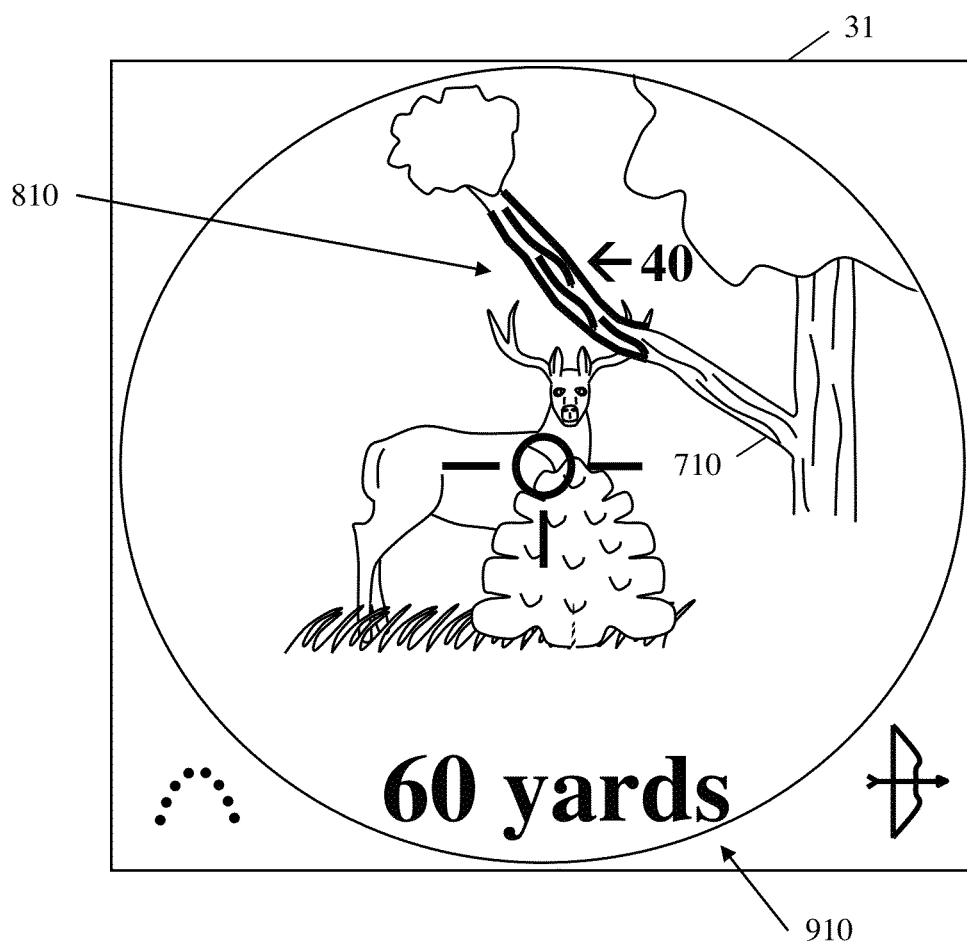


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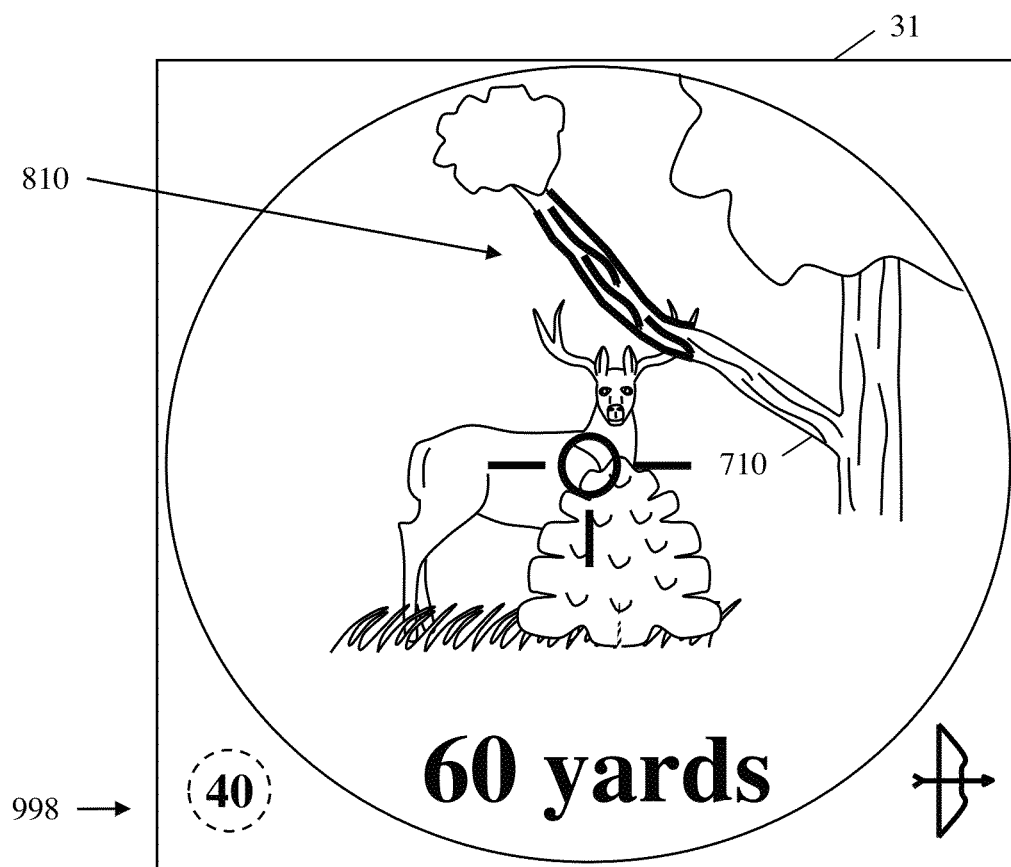


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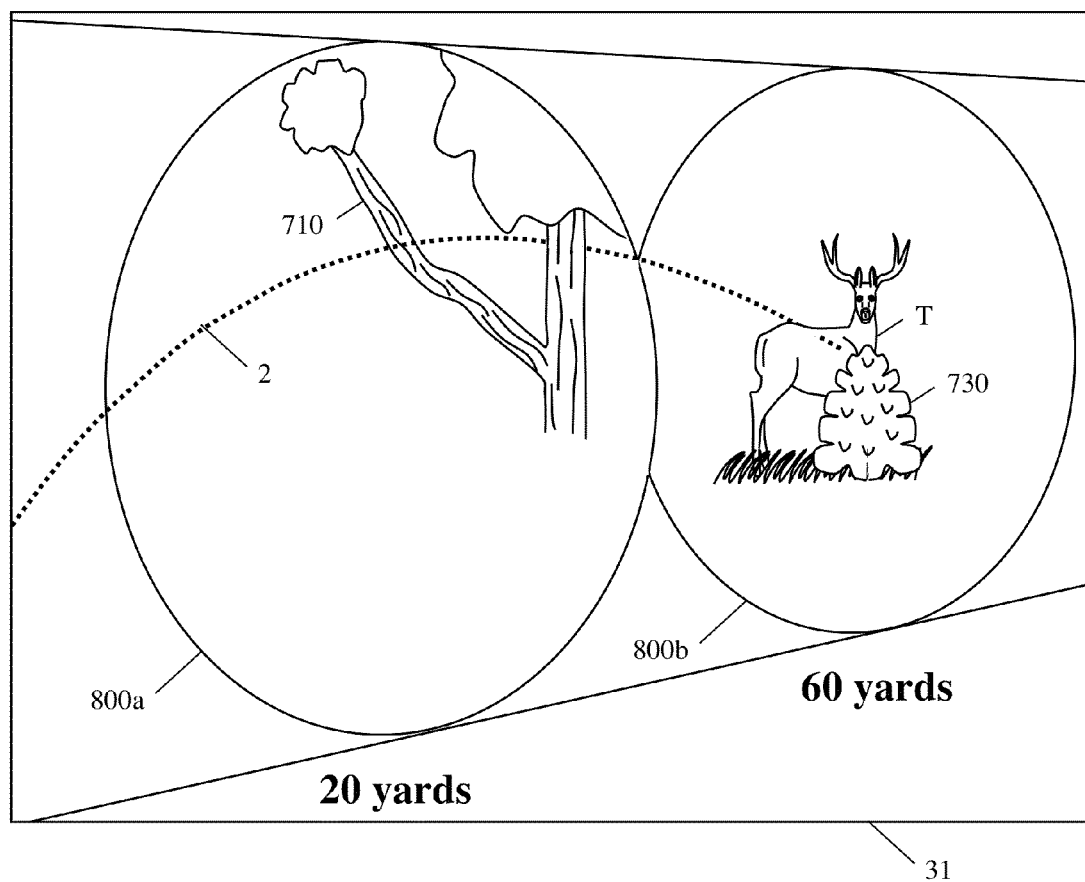


Fig. 32

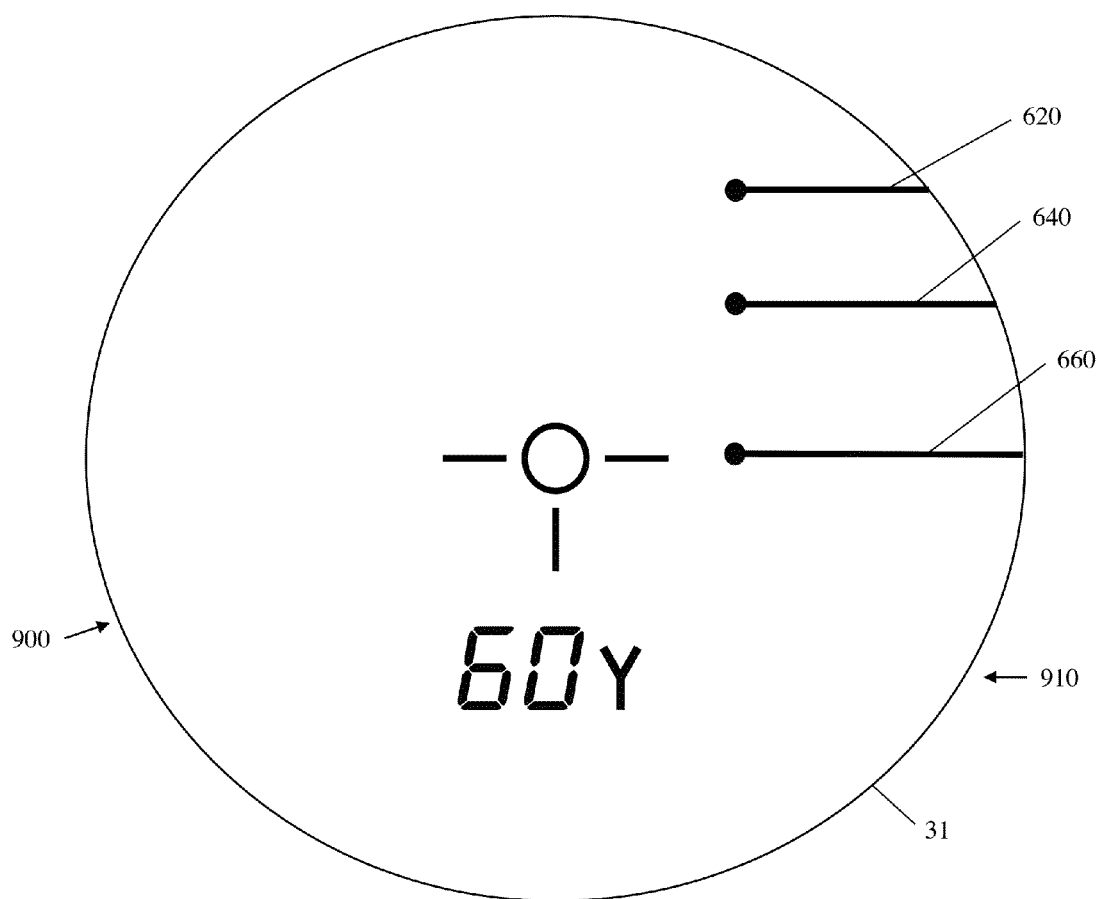


Fig. 33A

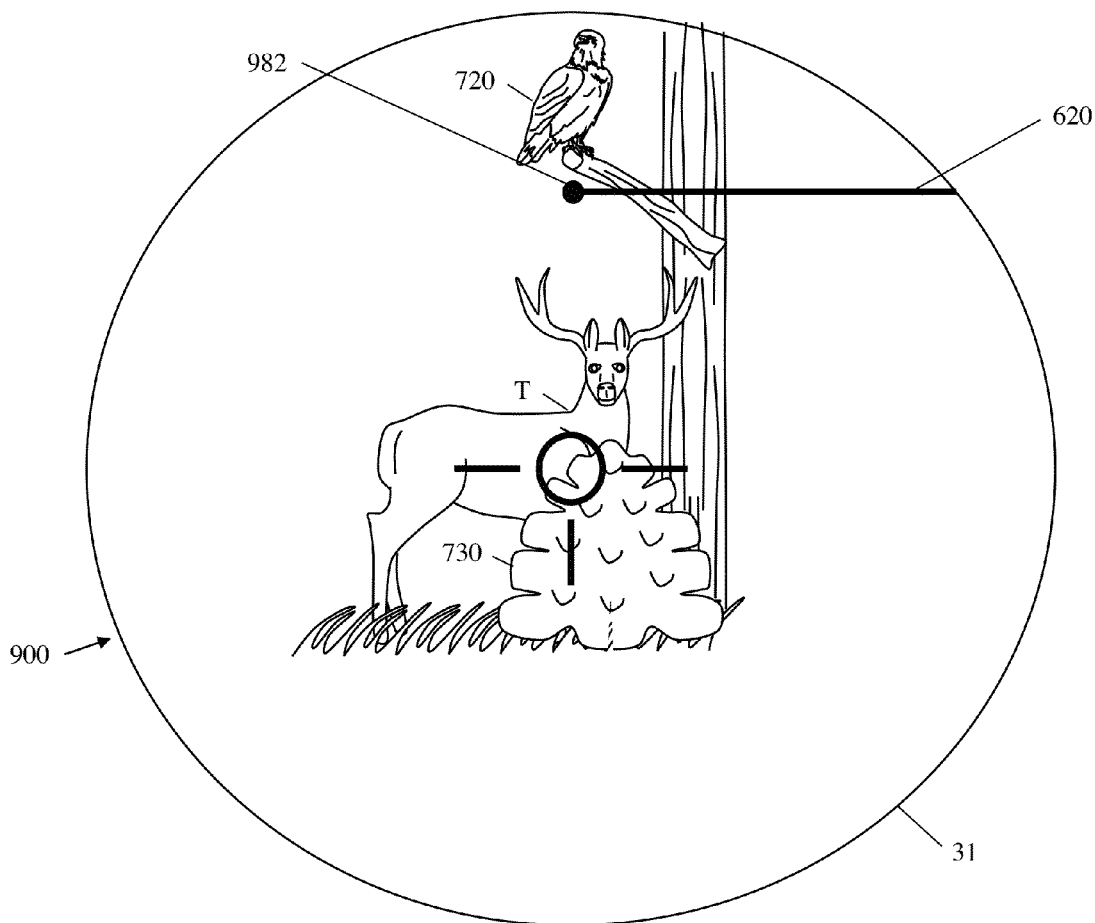


Fig. 33B

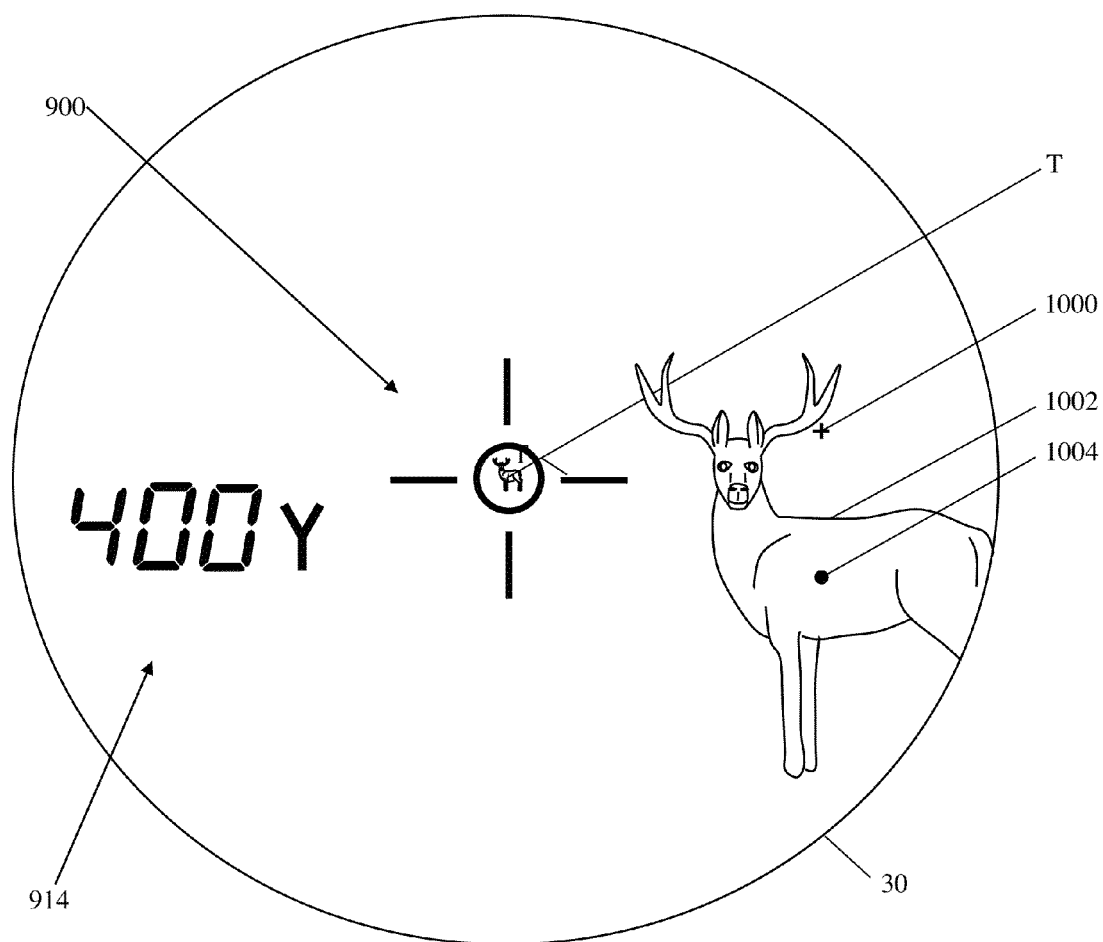


Fig. 34A

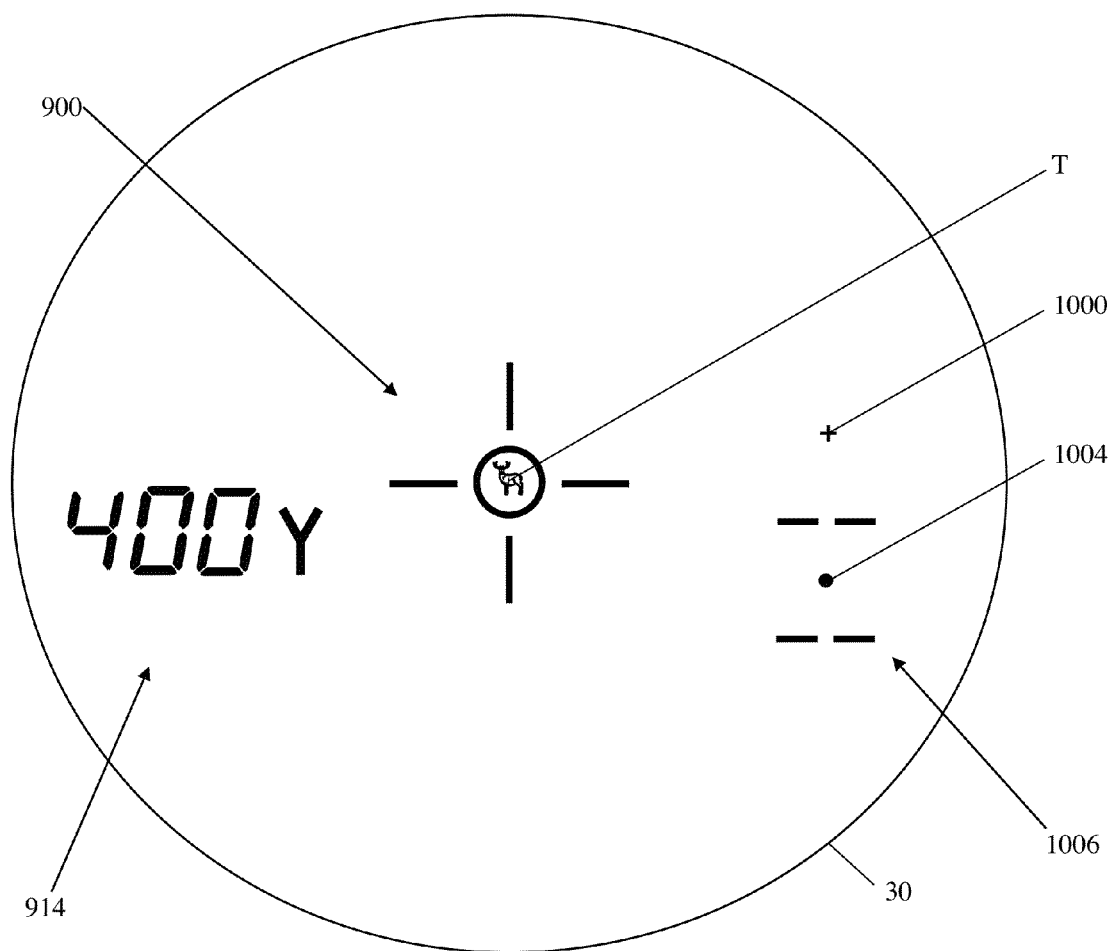


Fig. 34B

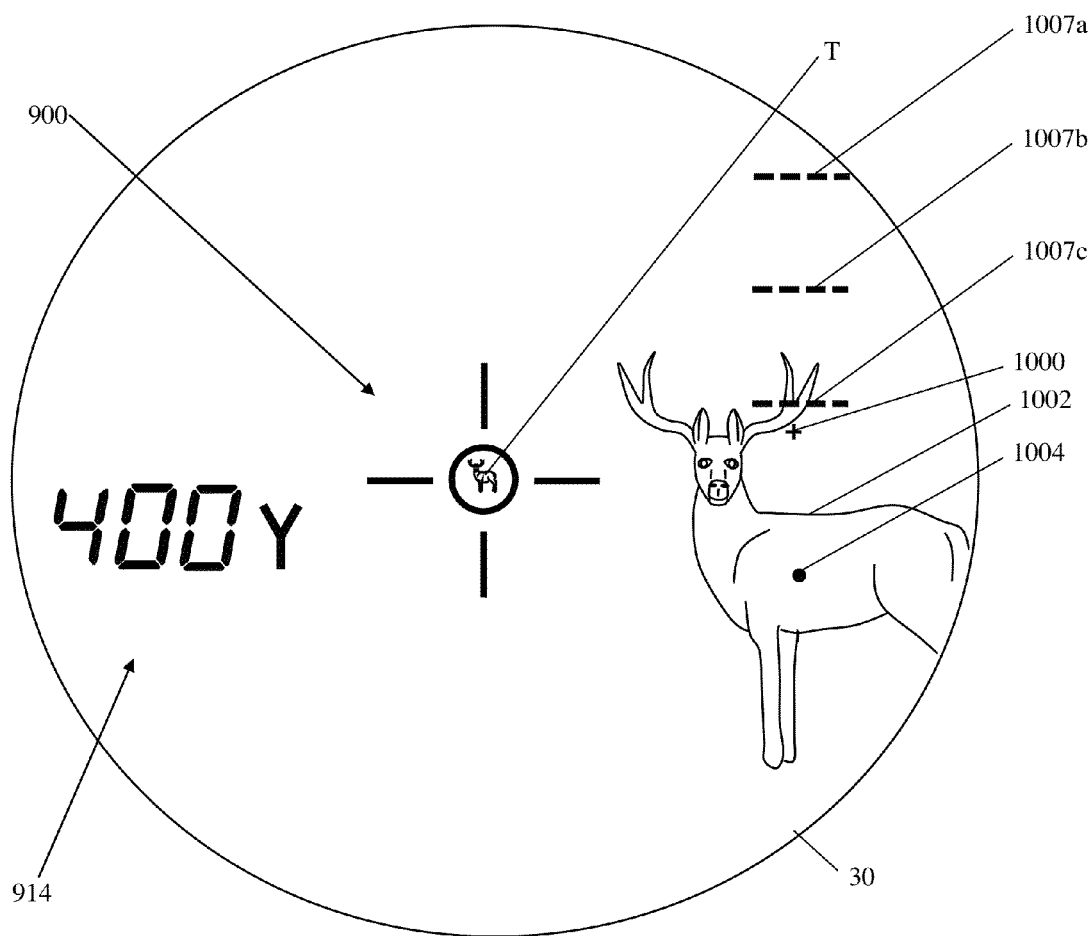


Fig. 34C

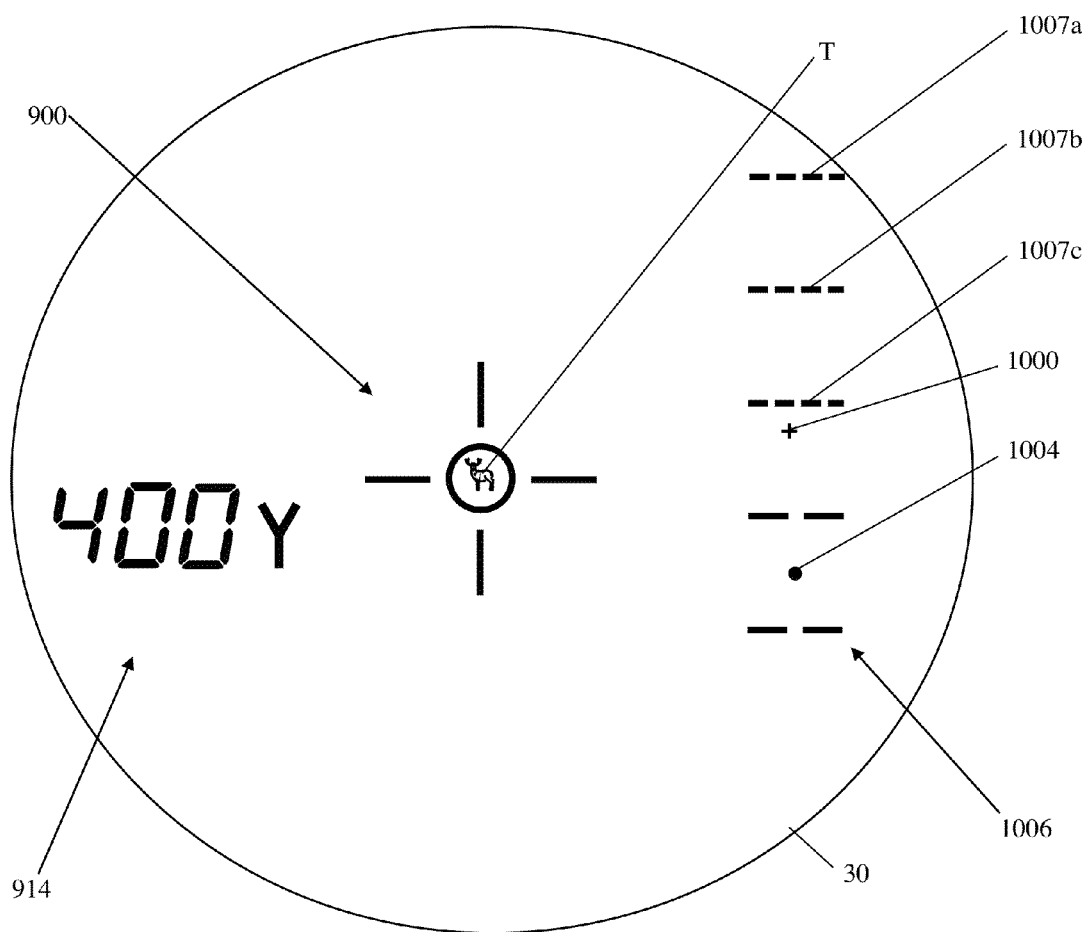


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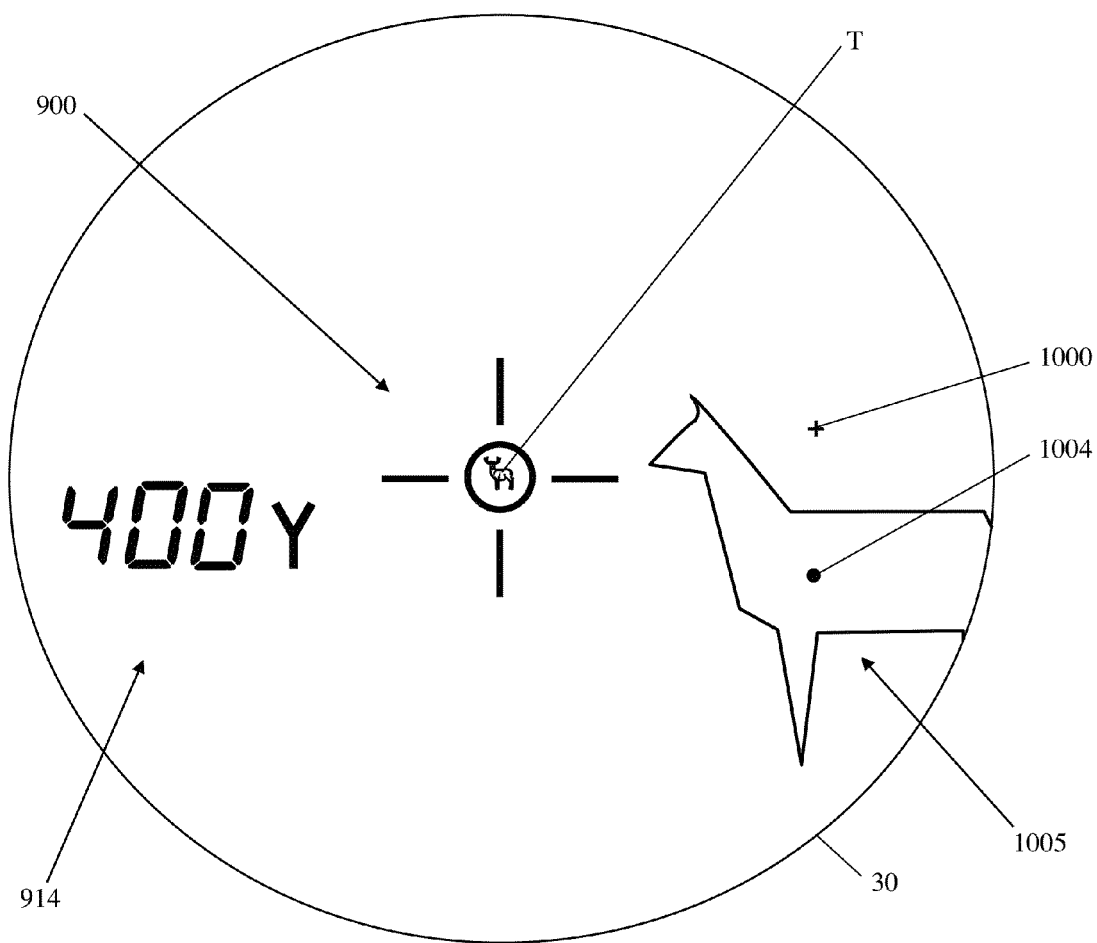


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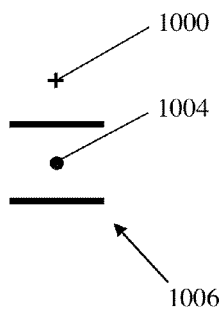


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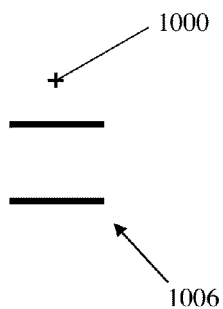


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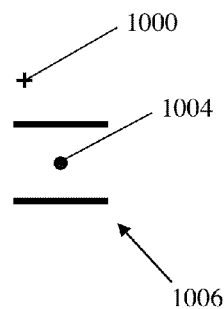


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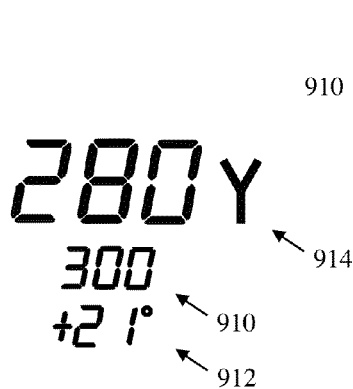


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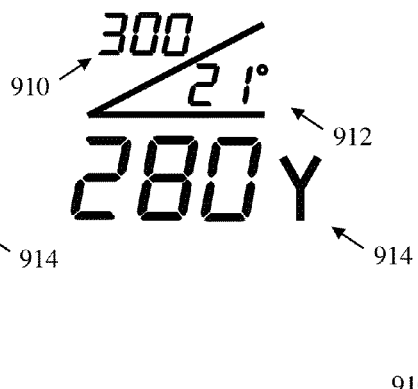


Fig. 36B

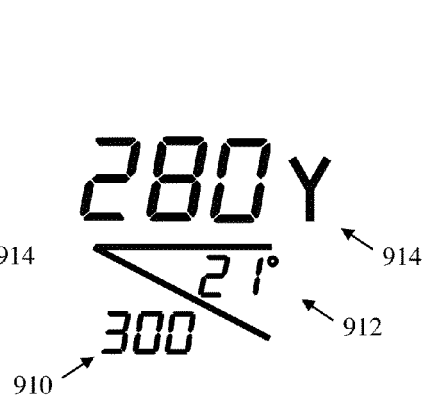


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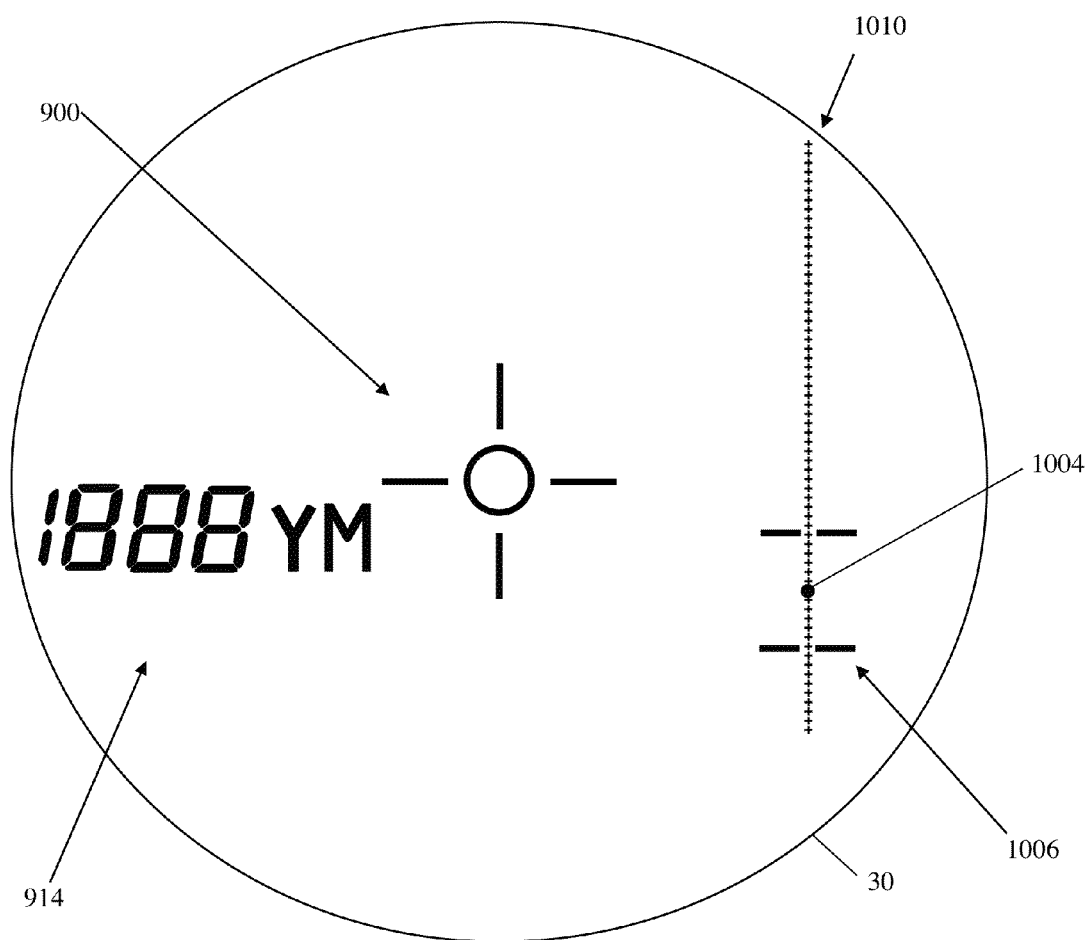


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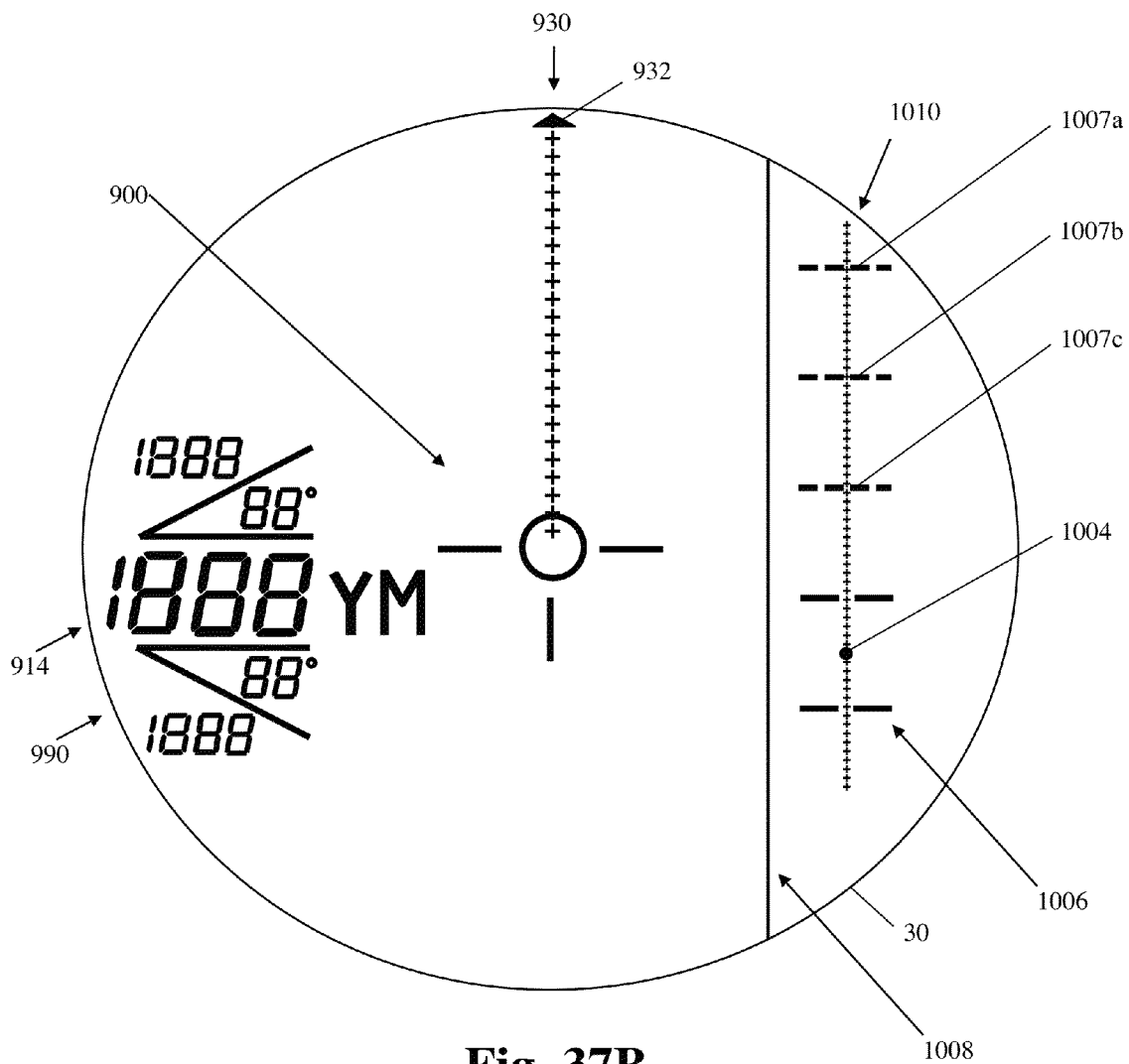


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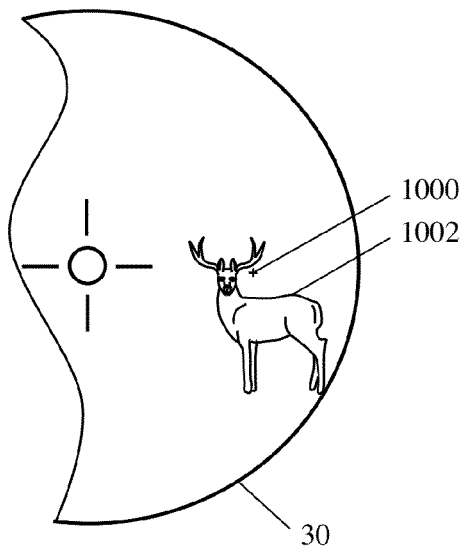


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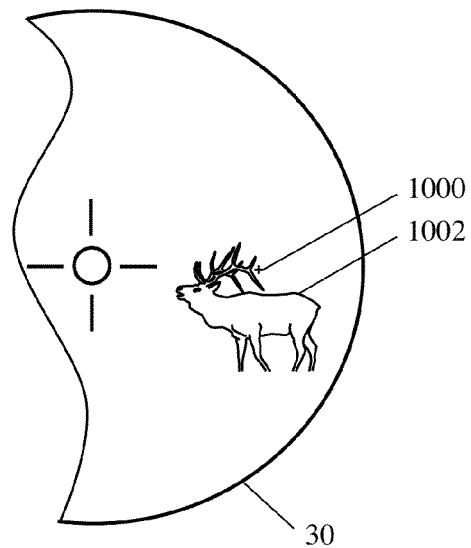


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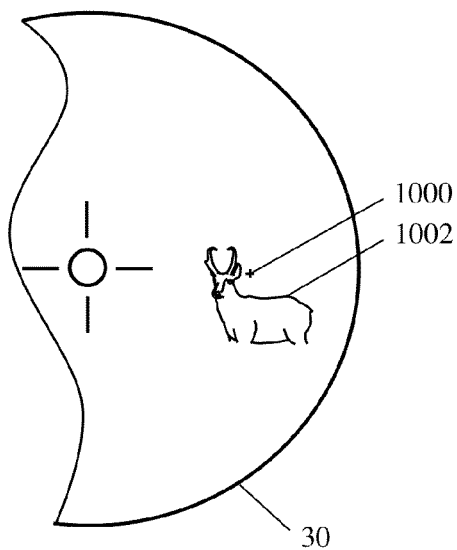


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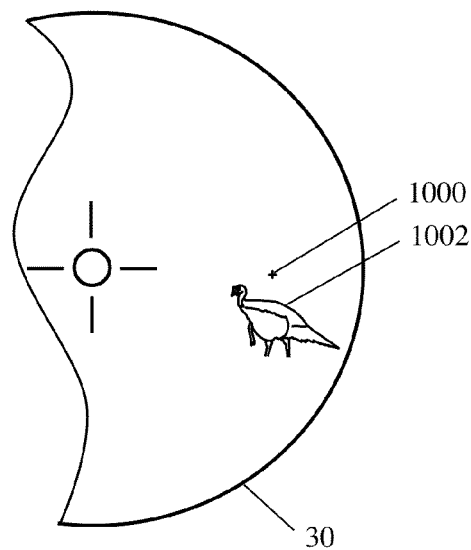


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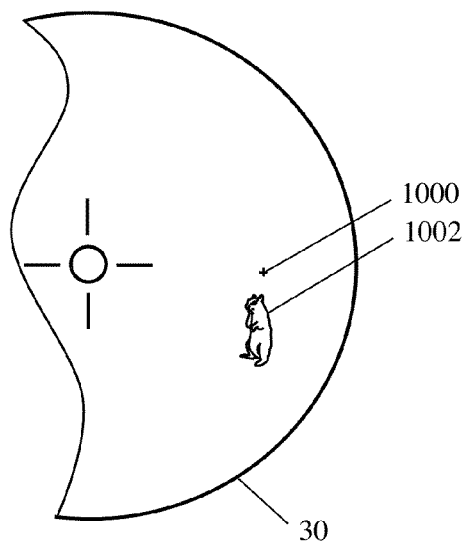


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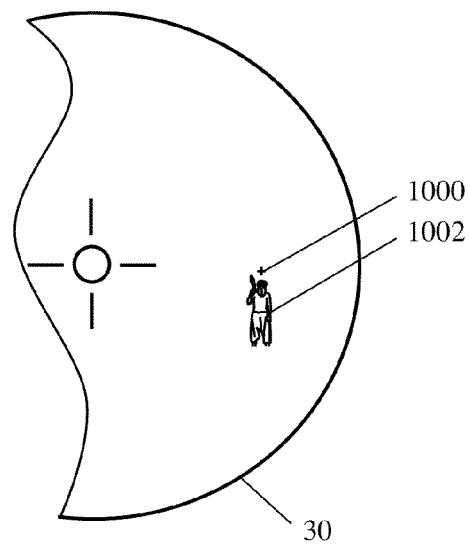


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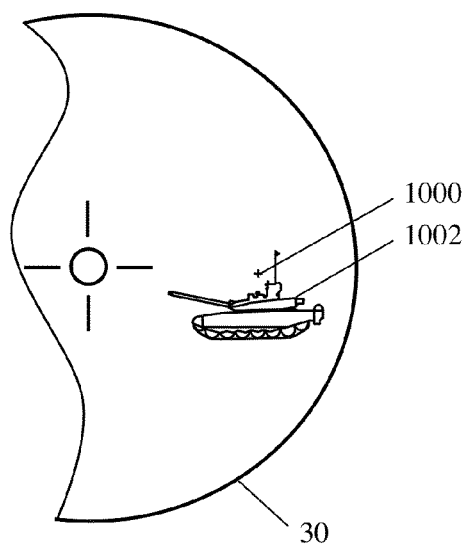


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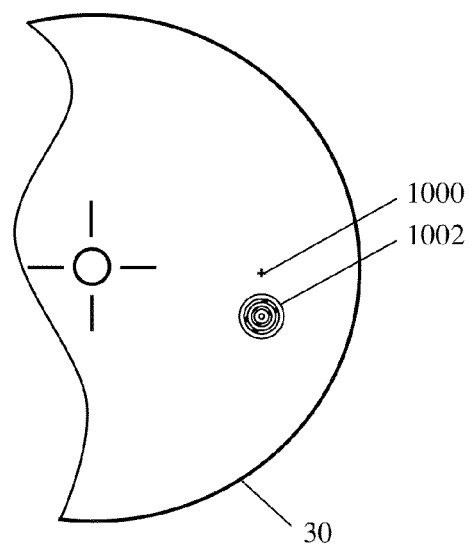


Fig. 38H

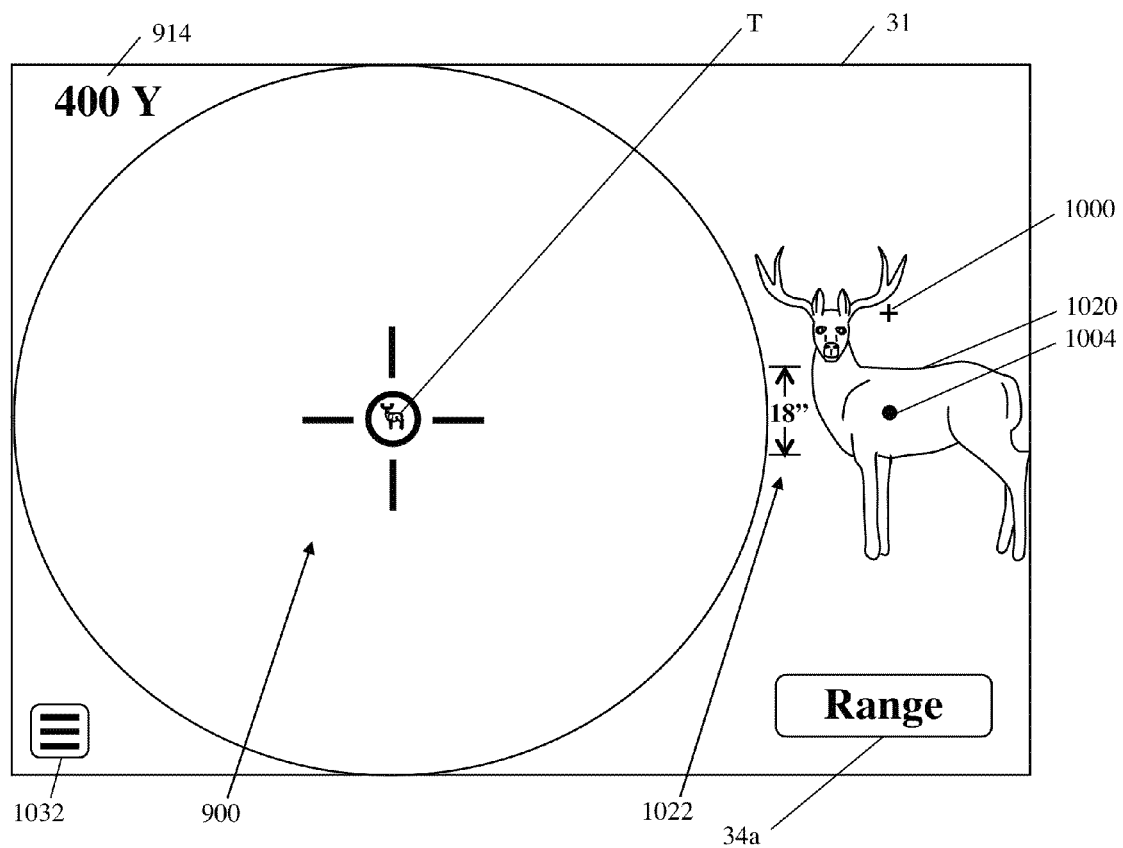


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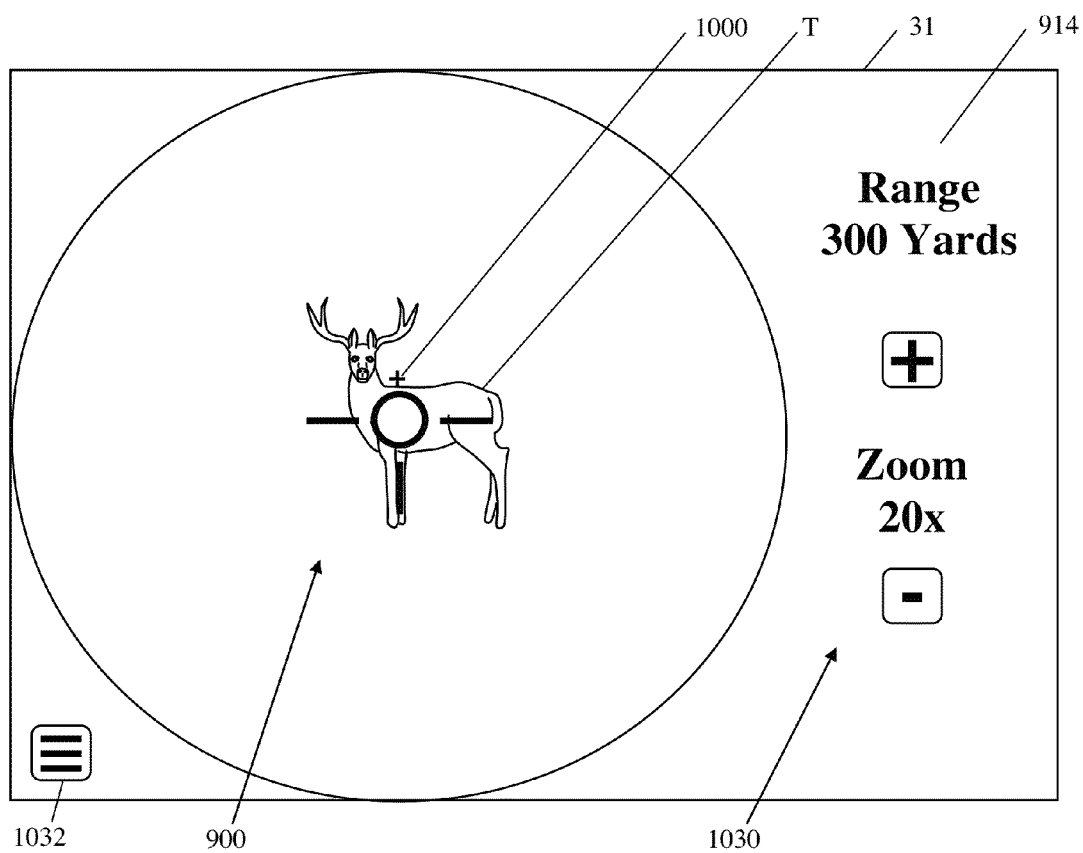


Fig. 40A

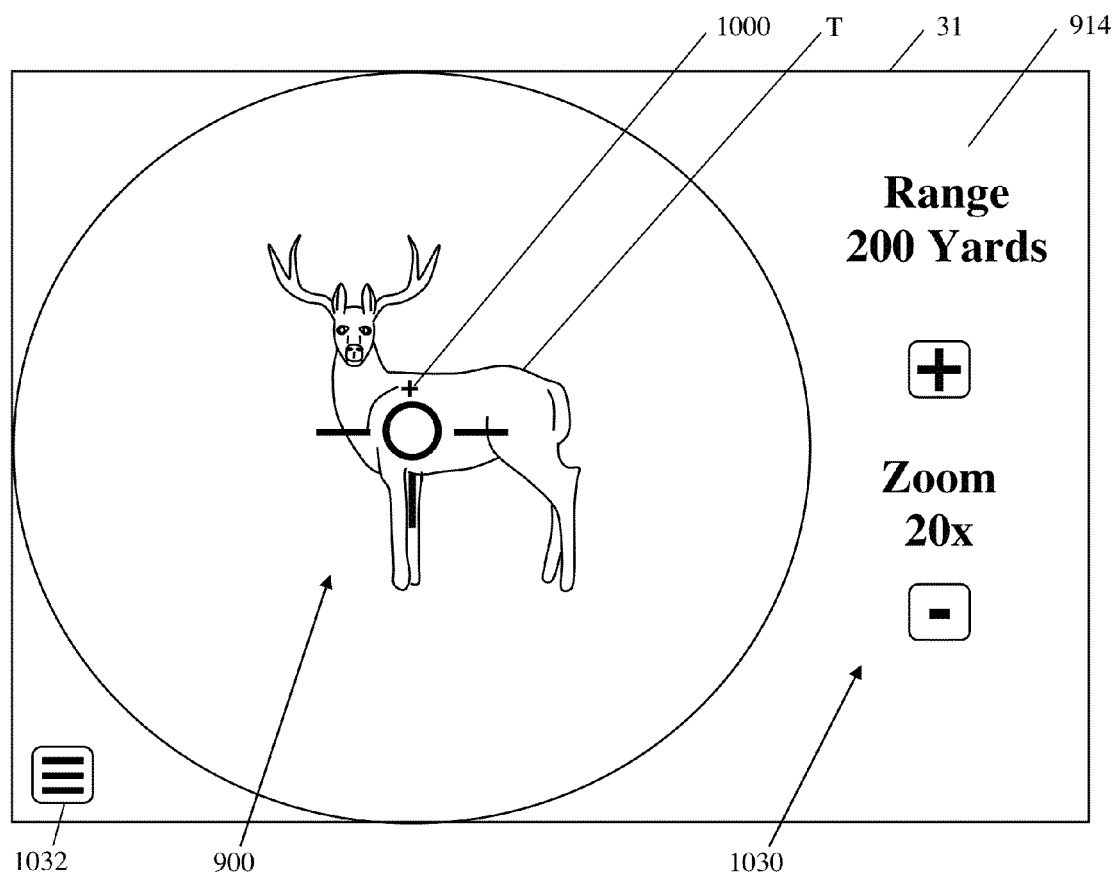


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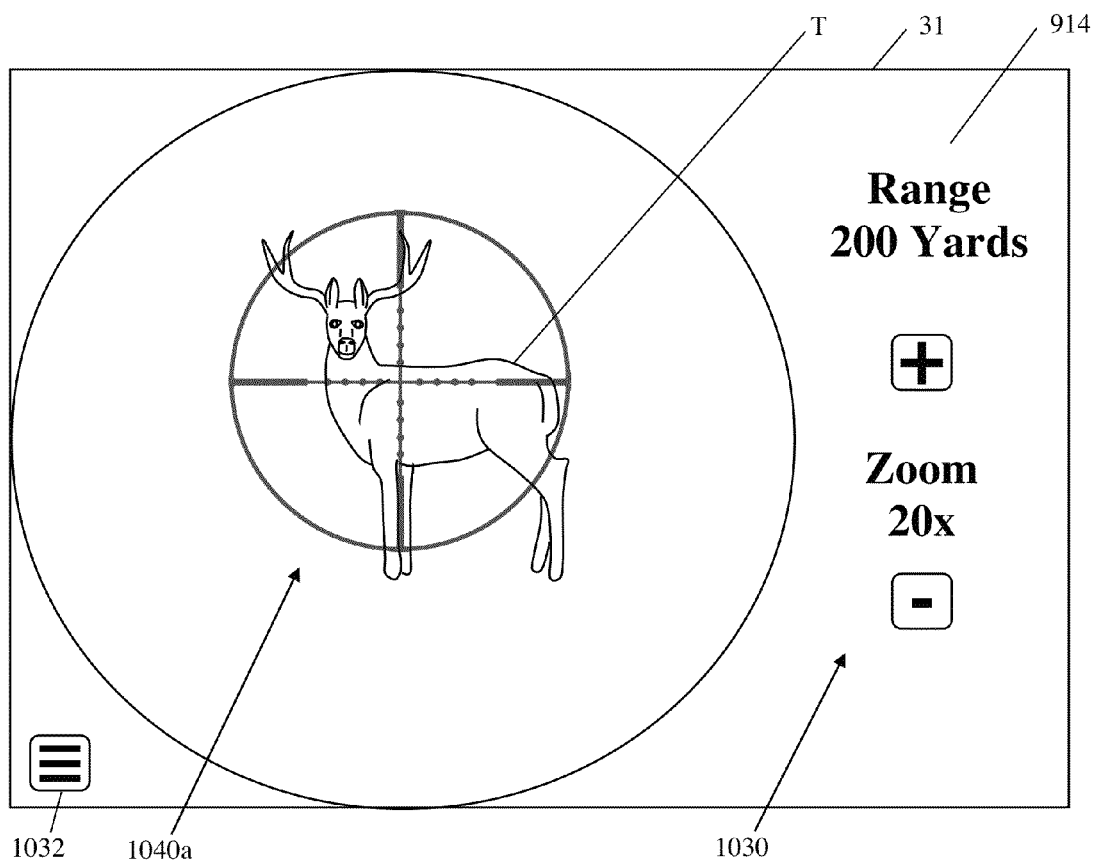


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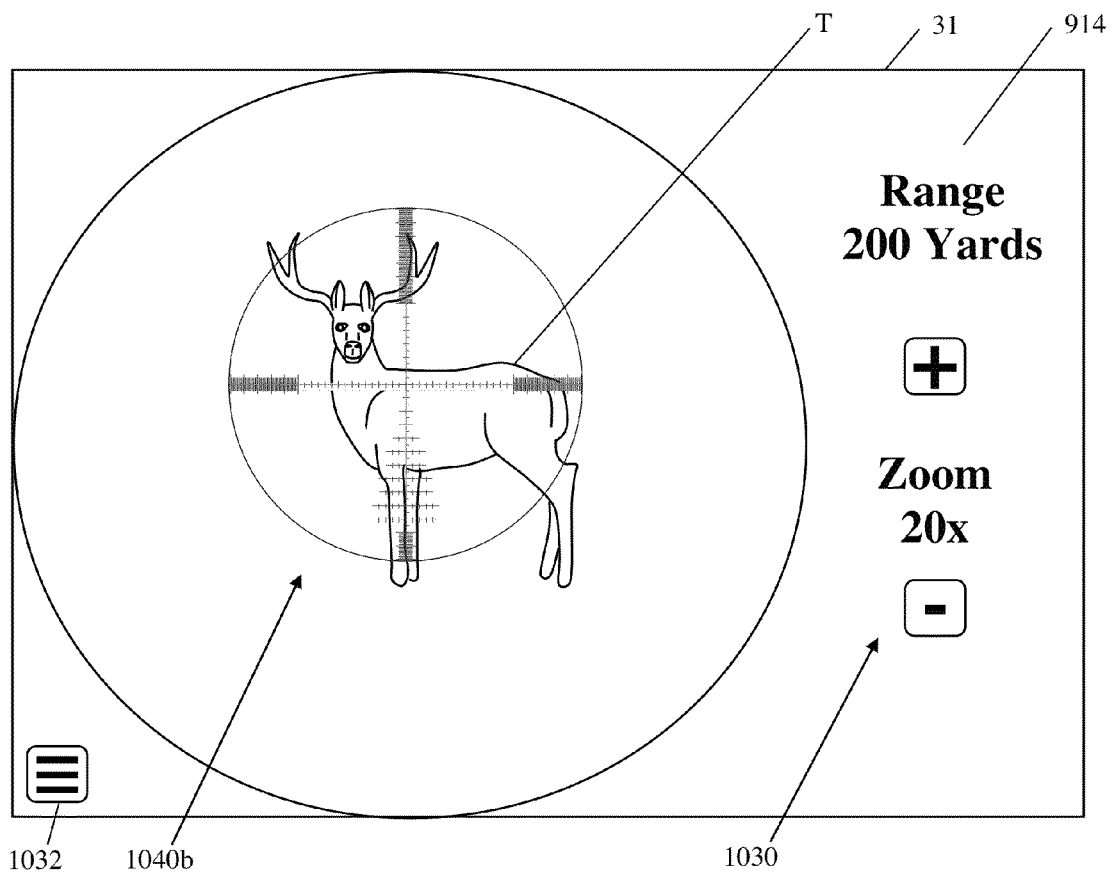
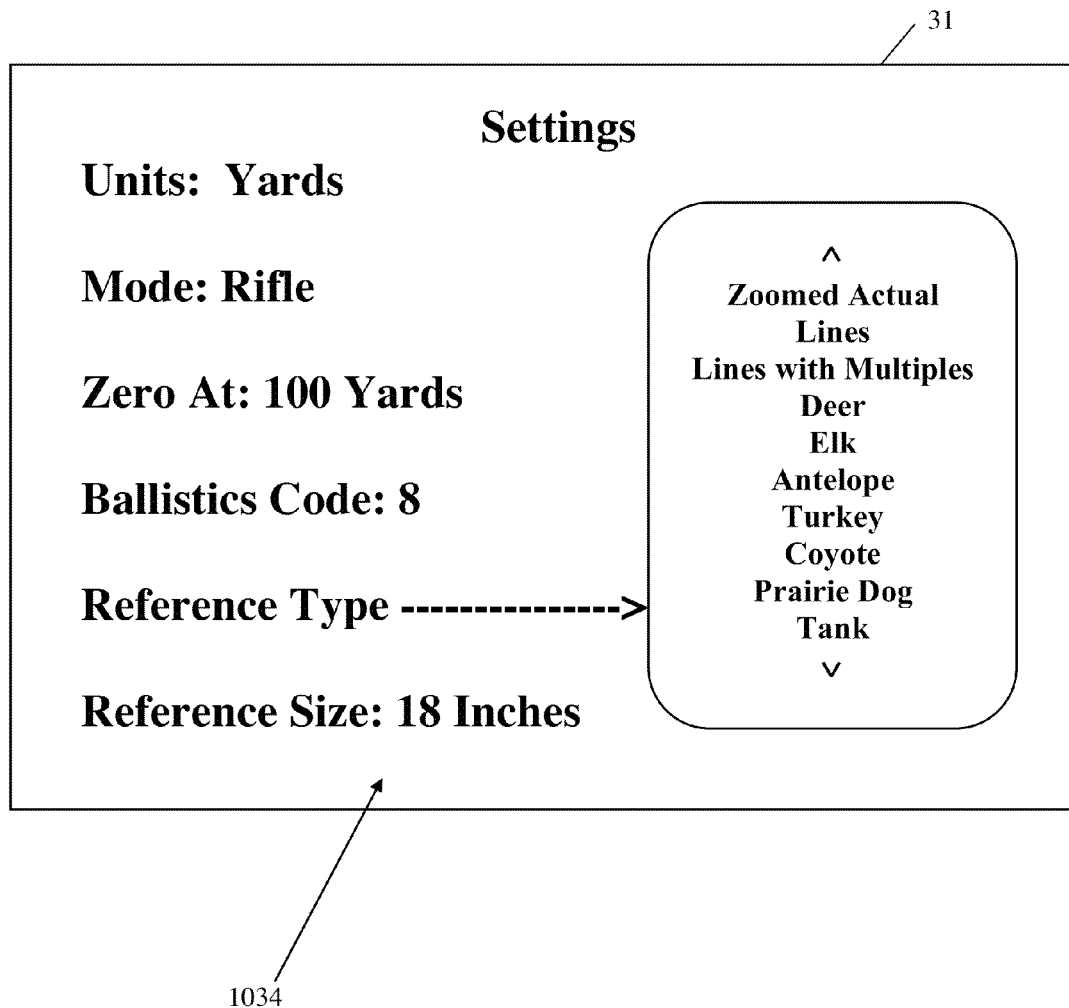


Fig. 40D

**Fig. 41**

DISPLAY INDICATING AIMING POINT RELATIVE TO TARGET SIZE INDICATOR

RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation in part of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 12/859,769 filed Aug. 19, 2010, which issued as U.S. Pat. No. 8,282,493 on Oct. 9, 2012. U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/599,450, filed Aug. 30, 2012, issued as U.S. Pat. No. 8,500,563 on Aug. 6, 2013, is a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 12/859,769. U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/959,655, filed Aug. 5, 2013, is also a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 12/859,769 and U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/599,450, and is pending. U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/458,946, filed Aug. 13, 2014, is also a continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. Nos. 12/859,769; 13/599,450; and 13/959,655, and is pending. U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/471,786, filed Aug. 28, 2014, is also a continuation in part of U.S. patent application Ser. Nos. 12/859,769; 13/599,450; 13/959,655; and 14/458,946, and is pending. This application claims priority based on U.S. patent application Ser. Nos. 12/859,769; 13/599,450; 13/959,655, 14/458,946, and 14/471,786 which are included herein by reference.

BACKGROUND

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a display that provides information regarding a projectile trajectory including an intermediate point that is an aiming point. The display includes a reference indicator such as a reference image or reference lines and a relative aiming point. The present invention also relates to devices such as handheld rangefinders that would comprise such a display and the methods for indicating a relative aiming point, some of which may be implemented as computer programs.

2. Description of Prior Art

Bows and arrows, spears, crossbows, guns, and artillery have been used for sport, hunting, and military.

An arrow is typically shot using the arms to pull back the bow string, and to aim and sight by holding the bow and arrow next to the archer's eye. More recently bow sights have been added to all types of bows. Typically a bow sight comprises a plurality of pins that may be adjusted by the archer for aiming at targets at different distances. Some bow sights have a single adjustable pin that is moved to the match the distance to the target.

FIG. 1 shows an archer **100** with a compound bow **102** with a bow sight **110**, and an arrow **104**.

FIG. 2 shows an example of a bow sight **110** with pins adjusted for twenty yards, forty yards, and sixty yards, namely a twenty-yard pin **220**, a forty-yard pin **240**, and a sixty-yard pin **260**, respectively.

Balls and/or bullets are typically shot from a gun using the arms to aim and sight by aligning the gun sights or gun scope reticle with the target.

Artillery balls and shells are typically shot by adjusting the aim mechanically.

Arrows, spears, balls, bullets, and shells when fired follow a ballistic trajectory. Such projectiles, which are not self-propelled, move through air according to a generally parabolic (ballistic) curve due primarily to the effects of gravity and air drag. The vertex form for a parabolic equation is $y=a(x-h)^2+k$, where the vertex is the point (h, k) and a negative a ($-a$) is a maximum. The standard form of the parabolic equation is $y=ax^2+bx+c$, where $h=-b/(2a)$ and $k=c-b^2/(4a)$.

Rifle and bow scopes conventionally have been fitted with reticles of different forms. Some have horizontal and vertical cross hairs. Others reticles such as mil-dot add evenly spaced dots for elevation and windage along the cross hairs. U.S. Design Pat. No. D522,030, issued on May 30, 2006, shows a SR reticle and graticule design for a scope. Various reticles, such as Multi Aim Point (MAP) and Dot are provided, for example, by Hawke Optics (<http://hawkeoptics.com>). These reticles are fixed in that the display does not change based on range information. Also, these reticles indicate the approximate hold-over position in that they are positioned under the center of the scope, i.e. below where the cross hairs intersect. They are not necessarily precise, for example, for a specific bow and archer, but are approximation for the general case.

Hunters and other firearm and bow users commonly utilize handheld rangefinders (see device **10** in FIG. 1) to determine ranges to targets. Generally, handheld rangefinders utilize lasers to acquire ranges for display to a hunter. Utilizing the displayed ranges, the hunter makes sighting corrections to facilitate accurate shooting.

For example, U.S. Pat. No. 7,658,031, issued Feb. 9, 2010, discloses handheld rangefinder technology from Bushnell, Inc. and is hereby included by reference. As shown in FIG. 3, a handheld rangefinder device **10** generally includes a range sensor **12** operable to determine a first range to a target, a tilt sensor **14** operable to determine an angle to the target relative to the device **10**, and a computing element **16**, coupled with the range sensor **12** and the tilt sensor **14**, operable to determine a hold over value based on the first range and the determined angle. The range information is displayed on a display **30**. A housing **20** contains the elements of the device **10**. Bushnell Angle Range Compensation (ARC) rangefinders show the first linear range to the target and also show an angle and a second range, which represents the true horizontal distance to the target. Handheld rangefinders, telescope sights, and other optical devices typically comprise a laser range sensor and an inclinometer.

The range information is superimposed over the image that is seen through the optics. For example, U.S. Design Pat. No. D453,301, issued Feb. 5, 2002, shows an example of a design for a display for a Bushnell rangefinder, and is hereby included by reference. FIG. 4 shows an exemplary display **30** appearing in a handheld rangefinder device **10**.

The ideal hunting target is shown in FIG. 5 where the target **T**, in this example, a deer, is in an open, level field with no obstacles. In practice, the target is often not at the same level and there are numerous obstacles between the shooter and the target. FIG. 6 shows a more realistic situation. In the field there may be obstacles such as tree branches, bushes, and other wildlife which are not the target and which may interfere with the trajectory of the projectile.

With convention rangefinder and a bow sight there is no correlation between the display of the rangefinder and the user's individual bow sight. To make an effective shot requires several steps. First the user operates the rangefinder to range the target. Second, the user raises the bow and uses the bow sight pins to visualize the shooting area. Third, the user lowers the bow and raises the rangefinder again to find the range to each object that may be a potential obstacle. Fourth, the user lowers the rangefinder and raises the bow to make the shot. All of the movement and time taken during these steps will likely be noticed by the target and allow the target an opportunity to move resulting in having to repeat the process or miss the shot altogether.

What is needed is an improved rangefinder with a display that provides information regarding a projectile trajectory so that a user is informed whether or not there is a clear shot.

Further, the improved rangefinder dynamically indicates positions along the trajectory based on ranges accurately determined by the rangefinder, such that the user is informed about the distance to specific obstacles and whether or not the obstacles would interfere with the trajectory of the projectile. Further, for bow use, the indicators on the display need to correspond to the bow sight pins.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention solves the above-described problems and provides a distinct advance in the art of rangefinder display. More particularly, the invention provides a display that provides information regarding a projectile trajectory so that a user is informed whether or not there is a clear shot. Such information facilitates accurate, effective, and safe fire-arm and bow use by providing indications regarding obstacles that are between the shooter and target and which may or may not be in the projectile trajectory.

In one embodiment, the present invention provides a rangefinder device for determining clear shot information. The device generally includes a range sensor operable to determine a first range to a target, a tilt sensor operable to determine an angle to the target relative to the device, and a computing element, coupled with the range sensor and the tilt sensor, operable to determine a projectile trajectory and to provide indicators which inform the user whether or not there is a clear shot.

In another embodiment, the rangefinder device automatically scans the points along the projectile trajectory to explicitly provide an indication whether or not there is a clear shot.

In other embodiments, a display is provided having a distance indicator and one or more path indicators, such as a twenty-yard indicator and/or a forty-yard indicator.

In other embodiments, a display dynamically illuminates one or more of a plurality of selectable path indicators to provide information regarding the projectile trajectory.

In another embodiment, a method for determining a clear shot includes manually ranging the target, observing potential obstacles, ranging each obstacle, and confirming that there is a clear shot.

In another embodiment, a method for determining a clear shot includes automatically ranging the target, determining the projectile trajectory, automatically ranging any obstacles, and providing an explicit indication whether or not there is a clear shot.

In other embodiments, a display is provided for games that simulate the operation of the device in a virtual world. These embodiments could include mobile smart phones such as the Apple iPhone and Google Droid and gaming systems such as Nintendo Wii, Sony PlayStation, Microsoft X-Box, and similar devices.

In another embodiment, a lightweight rangefinder comprises a high-resolution display and a digital camera.

In another embodiment, a lightweight rangefinder comprises a mobile smart phone and a range sensor combined in a housing configured to receive and connect electronically to the mobile smart phone.

In another embodiment, a display is provided having virtual bow sight pins.

In multiple embodiments, a display provides a relative aiming point that is display relative to a reference which shows the relative target size.

In some embodiments with relative aiming point, the reference is a reference image.

In some embodiments with relative aiming point, the reference is a reference indicator, shown as reference lines.

In some embodiments with relative aiming point, the display further comprises reference multiples.

In some embodiments with relative aiming point, the reference is a user selectable image.

In some embodiments with relative aiming point, the reference is a generic reference image.

In some embodiments with relative aiming point, the reference is an enlarged target reference.

In some embodiments with relative aiming point, the reference is a zoomed target image.

Accordingly, it is an objective of the present invention to provide a display that provides information regarding a projectile trajectory so that a user is informed whether or not there is a clear shot.

Other aspects and advantages of the present invention will be apparent from the following detailed description of the preferred embodiments and the accompanying drawing figures.

OBJECTS AND ADVANTAGES

Accordingly, the present invention includes the following advantages:

- a) To provide a display that provides dynamic information regarding a projectile trajectory.
- b) To provide a display that dynamically indicates clear shot to a ranged target.
- c) To provide a display that dynamically indicates distances to obstacles in a projectile trajectory.
- d) To provide a display that for a projectile trajectory to a ranged target shows a first path indicator, such as a twenty-yard indicator, above the cross hairs over the ranged target.
- e) To provide a display that for a projectile trajectory to a ranged target shows a plurality of path indicators, such as a twenty-yard indicator and a forty-yard indicator, above the cross hairs over the ranged target.
- f) To provide a display showing a path indicator, such as a twenty-yard indicator, above the cross hairs over the ranged target, which is consistent with a range pin in an individual user's bow and bow sight (or other type of weapon sight).
- g) To provide a display showing a plurality of path indicators above the cross hairs over the ranged target, which is consistent with range pins in an individual user's bow and bow sight (or other type of weapon sight).
- h) To provide a simple way of calibrating a handheld rangefinder to be consistent with an individual user's bow and bow sight pins (or other type of weapon sight).
- i) To provide a display that dynamically indicates a highest point in a projectile trajectory in relation to an image currently displayed based target range and angle.
- j) To provide a rangefinder that automatically calculates the points in a projectile trajectory to a ranged target and determines if any obstacle is located along the trajectory.
- k) To provide a display that automatically indicates that an obstacle is located along a projectile trajectory to a ranged target.
- l) To provide a video game having a display that simulates ranging targets at different elevations and with different obstacles and indicating whether or not there is a clear shot.
- m) To provide an iPhone application that simulates a rangefinder device and illustrates various projectile trajectories.

- n) To provide a mobile smart phone application that simulates a rangefinder device and illustrates various projectile trajectories.
- o) To provide a lightweight rangefinder comprising a high-resolution display and a digital camera.
- p) To provide a lightweight rangefinder comprising a mobile smart phone and a range sensor combined in a housing configured to receive and connect electronically to the mobile smart phone.
- q) To provide a display having virtual bow sight pins.
- r) To provide a rangefinder having variable focal range (or zoom) with automatically adjusting indications of a projectile trajectory.
- s) To provide an improved rangefinder which enable the user to visualize the projectile's trajectory creating confidence of a clear and safe shot.
- t) To provide a display that provides a relative aiming point.
- u) To provide a display that provides a relative aiming point relative to a reference target point.
- v) To provide a display that provides a relative aiming point relative to an enlarged actual image.
- w) To provide a display that provides a relative aiming point relative to a reference image.
- x) To provide a display that provides a relative aiming point relative to a reference indicator.
- y) To provide a display that provides a relative aiming point relative to a reference indicator and reference multiples.
- z) To provide a display that provides a relative aiming point relative to a generic reference.
- aa) To provide a display that provides a relative aiming point shown as virtual scope reticle.
- bb) To provide a digital rangefinder with a digital display of a relative aiming point.
- cc) To provide a digital rangefinder with a digital display of a relative aiming point and zoom control.
- dd) To provide an improved display of line of sight distance, horizontal distance, and angle.

DRAWING FIGURES

A preferred embodiment of the present invention is described in detail below with reference to the attached drawing figures, wherein:

FIG. 1 illustrates an archer with a bow with a bow sight;

FIG. 2 illustrates exemplary details of a bow sight with multiple pins;

FIG. 3 is a block diagram of a rangefinder device;

FIG. 4 shows the appearance of an exemplary display within a device;

FIG. 5 illustrates an ideal target situation;

FIG. 6 illustrates a realistic target situation;

FIG. 7A is a diagram illustrating a first range to a target and an associated projectile trajectory;

FIG. 7B is a diagram illustrating a second range and an associated projectile trajectory to the target of FIG. 7A when the target is elevated, i.e. at a positive angle;

FIG. 7C is a diagram illustrating a second range and an associated projectile trajectory to the target when the target is at a lower elevation, i.e. at negative angle;

FIG. 7D is a diagram illustrating realistic target situation and an associated projectile trajectory to the target when multiple obstacles are present between the shooter and the target;

FIG. 8 is a diagram illustrating various angles and projectile trajectories relative to the device;

FIGS. 9A through 9C illustrate a display having dynamic path indicators, including embodiments with twenty-yard and forty-yard indicators;

FIG. 10 shows an embodiment of a design for the display segments;

FIG. 11A is a schematic view of a target and obstacles observed while looking through the device, including a display illuminating the distance and twenty-yard and forty-yard indicators;

FIG. 11B is a schematic view of a target and obstacles observed while looking through the device, including a display illuminating the distance and twenty-yard and forty-yard indicators, and a clear shot indicator;

FIG. 11C is a schematic view of a target and obstacles observed while looking through the device, including a display illuminating the distance and twenty-yard and forty-yard indicators, and not clear indicators;

FIG. 11D is a schematic view of a target and obstacles observed while looking through the device, including a display indicating the range and an exemplary obstacle with a not clear indicator;

FIG. 12 illustrates an exemplary projectile trajectory for targets at three different distances;

FIG. 13A illustrates how the exemplary trajectories and angles of FIG. 12 are used to dynamically determine the display locations for twenty-yard and forty-yard indicators;

FIG. 13B illustrates how the exemplary trajectories and angles of FIG. 12 are used to dynamically determine the display location for a single twenty-yard indicator;

FIG. 14 is a rear perspective view of an exemplary rangefinder device;

FIG. 15 is a front perspective view of the rangefinder device of FIG. 14;

FIG. 16 is a flow chart for a method of using a rangefinder to determine a clear shot;

FIG. 17 is a flow chart for a fully automated method of determining a clear shot and providing a clear shot indication;

FIGS. 18A through 18C illustrate the steps in a method for calibrating a rangefinder device to a specific user's bow and bow sight;

FIGS. 18D and 18E illustrate an alternate method for calibrating a rangefinder device to a specific user's bow and bow sight using a calibration sheet;

FIG. 18F illustrates the user's perception of the maximum height of the projectile trajectory;

FIGS. 19A and 19B illustrate an alternate display having dynamic path indicators, including embodiments with twenty-yard and forty-yard indicators, maximum indicator, angle and second range indicator, mode indicators, such as a bow mode indicator;

FIGS. 19C through 19E illustrate additions features in some embodiments of the display;

FIG. 20 is a contour map, or chart, showing an exemplary layout of a virtual world for a game having a display providing a clear shot indication;

FIG. 21 shows a high-resolution digital display providing a clear shot indication and also shows optional game inputs;

FIG. 22 is a rear perspective view of a digital rangefinder device;

FIG. 23 is a front perspective view of the rangefinder device of FIG. 22;

FIG. 24 is a rear perspective view of another digital rangefinder device, comprising an exemplary Apple iPhone and a housing with a range sensor, visor, handle and alternative inputs;

FIG. 25 is a front perspective view of the rangefinder device of FIG. 24;

FIG. 26 is a rear perspective view of another digital rangefinder device, comprising an exemplary Apple iPhone and a housing with a range sensor and visor;

FIG. 27 is a front perspective view of the rangefinder device of FIG. 26;

FIG. 28 illustrates a sequence of display frames, on a high-resolution display, showing the projectile trajectory at various points along the path;

FIG. 29 illustrates a high-resolution display showing a plurality of locations on a projectile trajectory adjusted for wind or weapon inertia;

FIG. 30 illustrates a high-resolution display showing portions of an optical image that have been highlighted to show objects at an indicated range;

FIG. 31 illustrates a high-resolution display showing portions of an optical image that have been highlighted to show objects in the ring of fire;

FIG. 32 illustrates an animation on a high-resolution display showing portions of an optical image which have been split into image layers which represent objects at respective ranges, the layers being skewed to represent a side perspective and the animation showing the projectile moving through image layers along the projectile trajectory;

FIGS. 33A and 33B illustrates a high-resolution display showing embodiments of one or more virtual bow sight pins;

FIGS. 34A through 34E illustrate displays showing embodiments of a relative aiming point 1000 shown relative to a reference of a predetermine size, the reference shown by various means such as a reference image 1002, reference indicators 1006 lines, or a generic reference 1005.

FIGS. 35A through 35C illustrate various options for showing a relative aiming point relative to a reference indicator, including an optional reference target or wind correction;

FIGS. 36A through 36C illustrate various options for showing line of sight distance, horizontal distance, and angle;

FIGS. 37A and 37B show embodiments of layout for the display segments;

FIGS. 38A through 38H show embodiments of various reference images;

FIG. 39 illustrates a digital display showing a relative aiming point relative to an enlarged target image;

FIGS. 40A through 40D illustrate embodiments of digital displays showing relative aiming point relative to a zoomed target image, and zoom controls; and

FIG. 41 illustrates a digital embodiment of a display showing various settings.

The drawing figures do not limit the present invention to the specific embodiments disclosed and described herein. The drawings are not necessarily to scale, emphasis instead being placed upon clearly illustrating the principles of the invention.

REFERENCE NUMERALS IN DRAWINGS		
1 a-c	line of departure	
2 a-c	projectile trajectory	
3 a-c	line of sight	
4	horizontal line	
5	preception line	
10	device	60
11	iPhone	
12	range sensor	
14	tilt sensor	
16	computing element	
18	memory	
20	housing	65
21	alternate housing	

-continued

REFERENCE NUMERALS IN DRAWINGS	
22	eyepiece
23	housing slot
24	lens
25	digital camera
26	distal end
27	handle
28	proximate end
30	display
31	high-resolution display
32	inputs
33	trigger input
34 a-b	display inputs
35	visor or shroud
50 a-l	frame
60	redo path
62	range target step
64	observe obstacles step
66	range obstacle step
68	more obstacles decision
70	confirm clear shot step
72	determine range step
74	determine angle step
76	calculate trajectory step
78	scan trajectory path step
80	obstacle-in-path decision
82	yes path
84	warn not clear step
86	no path
88	indicate clear shot step
100	archer or user
102	bow
104	arrow
110	bow sight
120	bow string sight
180	paper target
182	twenty-yard mark
184	forty-yard mark
190	calibration sheet
192	twenty-yard calibration mark
194	forty-yard calibration mark
196	sixty-yard calibration mark
198	calibration instructions
220	twenty-yard pin
240	forty-yard pin
260	sixty-yard pin
320	twenty-yard line
340	forty-yard line
420	twenty-yard projection
440	forty-yard projection
620	virtual twenty-yard pin
640	virtual forty-yard pin
660	virtual sixty-yard pin
700	obstacles
710	branch
720	bald eagle
730	bush
800 a-b	image layer
810	image highlight
900	cross hairs
910	distance indicator
912	angle indicator
914	horizontal distance indicator
920	twenty-yard indicator
930	(selectable) path indicators
932	off screen indicator
940	forty-yard indicator
950	clear shot indicator
960	don't shoot indicator
970	not clear indicator
980	maximum indicator
982	aiming point
984	level
986 a-b	rotation indicators
990	angle and second range indicator
992	bow mode indicator
994	rifle mode indicator
996	trajectory mode indicator

-continued

REFERENCE NUMERALS IN DRAWINGS	
998	ring-of-fire indicator
1000	relative aiming point
1002	reference image
1004	reference target
1005	generic reference
1006	reference indicator
1007 a-c	reference multiple
1008	separator
1010	aiming point indicators
1020	enlarged target image
1022	reference measurement
1030	zoom control
1032	settings control
1034	settings
1040 a-b	virtual reticle
P a-c-o, 20, 40	point
θ a-c, 20, 40	angle
T a-c	target
V a-b	vertex

DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The following detailed description of the invention references the accompanying drawings that illustrate specific embodiments in which the invention can be practiced. The embodiments are intended to describe aspects of the invention in sufficient detail to enable those skilled in the art to practice the invention. Other embodiments can be utilized and changes can be made without departing from the scope of the present invention. The following detailed description is, therefore, not to be taken in a limiting sense. The scope of the present invention is defined only by the appended claims, along with the full scope of equivalents to which such claims are entitled.

Projectile Trajectories

FIG. 7A is a diagram illustrating a first range to a target T and an associated projectile trajectory 2. The rangefinder device 10 is show level such and the associated projectile trajectory leaves the weapon and enters the target at substantially the same true elevation (horizontal line 4).

The first range preferably represents a length of an imaginary line drawn between the device 10 and the target T, as shown in FIG. 7A, such as the number of feet, meters, yards, miles, etc., directly between the device 10 and the target T. Thus, the first range may correspond to a line of sight (LOS) 3 between the device 10 and the target T.

FIG. 7B is a diagram illustrating a second range and an associated projectile trajectory 2 to the target T when the target T is elevated, i.e. is at a positive angle. The first range is the sensed range along the line of sight 3. The second range is the true horizontal distance to the target T, as measured along the horizontal line 4. A third range is the true horizontal distance, as measured along the horizontal line 4, to the projectile trajectory 2 intercept. Half of the third range is the x-axis distance to the vertex V of the projectile trajectory 2. The second range is determined by multiplying the first range by the cosine of the angle.

FIG. 7C is a diagram illustrating a second range and an associated projectile trajectory 2 to the target T when the target T is at a lower elevation, i.e. is at a negative angle. The first range is the sensed range along the line of sight 3. The second range is the true horizontal distance to the target T, as measured along the horizontal line 4. The third range is the true horizontal distance, as measured along the horizontal line

4, to the projectile trajectory 2 intercept. Half of the third range is the x-axis distance to the vertex V of the projectile trajectory 2.

In situations where the angle is non-zero, such as when the target T is positioned above (FIG. 7B) or below (FIG. 7C) the device 10, the parabolic movement of the projectile affects the range calculation, such that the projectile may have to travel a longer or shorter distance to reach the target T. Thus, the second range provides an accurate representation to the user of the flat-ground distance the projectile must travel to intersect the target T.

FIG. 7D is a diagram illustrating an exemplary realistic target situation (similar to the one shown in FIG. 6) and an associated projectile trajectory 2 to the target T when multiple obstacles are present between the shooter and the target. A tree with a branch 710 is show at about twenty yards. A bald eagle 720 is shown in a second tree at about forty yards. Also at forty yards is a bush 730. These obstacles conventionally would cause a lack of confidence and concern regarding the accuracy, effectiveness, safety, ethics, and legality of the anticipated shot. Because the bush 730 is in the line of sight 3, some users with little understanding of parabolic trajectories would not believe they could make the shot. Other users, who understand that the projectile trajectory is parabolic, know that the path of the trajectory goes above the line of sight 3 (see also FIG. 8). These more understanding shooters may be concerned that the projectile would hit the branch 710 or the bald eagle 720. The clear shot technology disclosed herein provides several solutions to address these concerns.

FIGS. 7A through 7C are shown with an exemplary projectile trajectory 2 based on a parabola with an A value of -0.005 .

FIG. 8 is a diagram illustrating various angles and projectile trajectories relative to the device. The device 10 preferably comprises a tilt sensor 14. The tilt sensor 14 is operable to determine the angle to the target T from the device 10 relative to the horizontal. Thus, as shown in FIGS. 7A and 8, if the device 10 and the target T are both positioned on a flat surface having no slope, the angle would be zero. As shown in FIGS. 7B and 8, if the device 10 is positioned below the target T the slope between the device 10 and the target T is positive, the angle would be positive. Conversely, as shown in FIGS. 7C and 8, if the device 10 is positioned above the target T, such that the slope between the device 10 and the target T is negative, the angle would be negative.

Clear Shot Displays

FIGS. 9A through 9C illustrate a display having dynamic path indicators 930 (or trajectory path indicators). The path indicators 930 each show a point in the trajectory path at an intermediate range. A display aspect of the present invention includes embodiments with twenty-yard indicators 920 and forty-yard indicators 940.

FIG. 9A shows the active display elements when the target T (not shown for clarity) is ranged at twenty yards. The display shows the cross hairs 900 (shown here with a center circle) which are placed on the target T. The display 30 dynamically shows that the range is twenty yards in the distance indicator 910. Because of the short distance, the projectile trajectory is close to linear so no additional indication is generally needed.

In the figures the symbols used for the various indicators are exemplary and other shapes or styles of indicators could be used. For example, the cross hairs 900 are shown with a center circle, but other styles such as intersecting lines, a solid center dot, and so forth could be used. Also the distance

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indicator **910** is shown having using seven segments for the digits, but other shapes of styles could be used. Positions are also exemplary.

FIG. 9B shows the active display elements when the target T (not shown for clarity) is ranged at forty yards. The display **30** shows the cross hairs **900** (shown here with a center circle) which are placed on the target T. The display **30** dynamically shows that the range is forty yards in the distance indicator **910**. The display **30** also dynamically illuminates a twenty-yard indicator **920**. The twenty-yard indicator **920** shows a point in the projectile trajectory **2** path (e.g. FIG. 7D) at twenty yards relative to the optical image (not shown for clarity) upon which the display **30** is superimposed. The twenty-yard indicator **920** informs the user where the projectile will be at twenty yards distance. Because the twenty-yard indicator **920** shows an intermediate trajectory path point where the arrow will be at twenty yards distance, the twenty-yard indicator **920** is a twenty-yard pin aiming point **982**. A bow hunter can place the twenty-yard pin **220** of the bow sight **110** on the same visual spot indicated, for example as shown in FIG. 11A, and the arrow will hit the target T at the cross hairs **900**.

FIG. 9C shows the active display elements when the target T (not shown for clarity) is ranged at sixty yards. The display **30** shows the cross hairs **900** (shown here with a center circle) which are placed on the target T. The display **30** dynamically shows that the range is sixty yards in the distance indicator **910**. The display **30** also dynamically illuminates the twenty-yard indicator **920** and a forty-yard indicator **940**. The twenty-yard indicator **920** shows a point in the projectile trajectory **2** path (e.g. FIG. 7D) at twenty yards and the forty-yard indicator **940** shows a point at forty yards, both relative to the optical image upon which the display **30** is superimposed. The twenty-yard indicator **920** informs the user where the projectile will be at twenty yards distance. Further, at ranges greater than forty yards, the forty-yard indicator **940** informs the user where the projectile will be at forty yards distance.

The target ranges of twenty, forty, and sixty yards are exemplary and chosen to simplify the description of the figures. However, the range displayed on the distance indicator **910** is the actual line of sight **3** range to the target T. If the actual range were twenty-eight yards, then the distance indicator **910** would show twenty-eight yards and the twenty-yard indicator **920** would be shown closer to the cross hairs **900** than it is shown in FIG. 9B. Further, if the actual range were thirty-seven yards, then the distance indicator **910** would show thirty-seven yards and the twenty-yard indicator **920** would be shown farther from the cross hairs **900** than it is shown in FIG. 9B, but not quite as far as it is shown in FIG. 9C. This highlights the dynamic nature of the illumination of the path indicators (e.g. **920** or **940**).

The examples herein generally use yards as the unit of measure. The invention is not limited to yards, but could also be set using feet, meters, kilometers, miles, and so forth.

In some bow embodiments the display **30** or device **10** is calibrated such that the location of the twenty-yard indicator **920** matches the relative position of the twenty-yard pin **220** on the individual user's bow and bow sight **110** (see FIGS. 1 and 2).

In other bow embodiments the display **30** or device **10** is calibrated such that both locations of the twenty-yard indicator **920** and the forty-yard indicator **940** match the relative position of the twenty-yard pin **220** and forty-yard pin **240**, respectively, on the individual user's bow and bow sight **110** (see FIGS. 1 and 2).

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FIG. 10 shows an embodiment of a design for the display segments. An exemplary display **30** comprises segments forming cross hairs **900**, distance indicator **910**, a plurality of selectable path indicators **930**, and an optional clear shot indicator **950**. The distance indicator **910** is shown comprising a plurality of seven-segment displays that can be selectively illuminated to display any digit, and segments that indicate "Y" for yards or alternatively "M" for meters. The plurality of selectable path indicators **930** are dynamically and selectively illuminated to provide one or both of the twenty-yard indicator **920** and forty-yard indicator **940**. In some embodiments, the selectable path indicators **930** could also represent a sixty-yard indicator; more granularity with an additional thirty yard and/or fifty yard indicators; or comparable meter or feet indicators. Some embodiments may contain segments that spell out the words "CLEAR SHOT" or "CLEAR" which act as a clear shot indicator **950**. The segments may be shown as black, white, green, red or a plurality of colors. In some embodiments the colors and intensity of the segments may be user selectable or automatically set based on the darkness or colors of the optical image upon which the display **30** is superimposed.

Clear Shot Display Operation

FIG. 11A is an exemplary schematic view of a target T and obstacles (**710**, **720**, **730**) observed while looking through the device **10**, including a display illuminating the distance indicator **910**, a twenty-yard indicator **920** and a forty-yard indicator **940**. The appearance of the display is the same as FIG. 9C with the addition of exemplary target T and obstacles, e.g. branch **710**, bald eagle **720**, and bush **730**. FIG. 7D shows the same set of potential obstacles and projectile trajectory **2** from the side. In this example, the deer (target T) is ranged at a line of sight **3** distance of sixty yards. Both the twenty-yard indicator **920** and forty-yard indicator **940** are shown. The user can see that both the twenty-yard indicator **920** and forty-yard indicator **940** are positioned over clear areas in the optical image. In this example, the twenty-yard indicator **920** is below the bald eagle **720** and the forty-yard indicator **940** is above the bush **730**. Even though the bush **730** is in the line of sight **3** (indicated at the cross hairs **900**) the projectile will pass over the bush (as shown in FIG. 7D).

Thus, the information from the display provides an indication to the user **100** that a clear shot can be taken. Further, the user **100** can lower the device **10** and pick up the weapon, for example, bow **102** and match the corresponding bow sight pins (e.g. twenty-yard pin **220** and forty-yard pin **240**, respectively) to the same positions that were visualized relative to the optical image seen in the device **10**. As discussed above in relation to FIG. 9B, because the twenty-yard indicator **920** shows a point where the arrow will be at twenty yards distance, the twenty-yard indicator **920** is a twenty-yard pin aiming point **982**, and placing the twenty-yard pin **220** in the same position that was visualized relative to the optical image seen in the device **10** will effectively aim the arrow at the target T. Likewise the forty-yard indicator **940** is a forty-yard pin aiming point. Alternatively, placing the forty-yard pin **240** in the same position that was visualized at the forty-yard indicator **940** relative to the optical image seen in the device **10** will effectively aim the arrow at the target T. In the exemplary image shown, the forty-yard pin **240** would be placed just above the base of the deer's antler.

As will be discussed in greater detail later, the user **100** could use the device **10** to find the range to the branch **710** (e.g. twenty yards) and to the bush **730** (e.g. forty yards) and to the bald eagle **720** (e.g. forty yards). This would provide further confidence that a safe, effective, ethical, and legal shot could be taken.

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If the range sensor **12** is a laser and is blocked by the bush **730**, the user **100** can find the range of another part of the target (such as the hind quarters), the ground, or a nearby object such as a rock or tree, and use the twenty-yard indicator **920** and forty-yard indicator **940** to visualize the elevation of the other potential obstacles, to reach a determination that the shot would be clear.

FIG. **11B** is exemplary schematic view of a target **T** and obstacles (**710**, **720**, **730**) observed while looking through the device **10**, including another embodiment of a display illuminating the distance indicator **910**, a twenty-yard indicator **920**, a forty-yard indicator **940**, and a clear shot indicator **950**. The situation and appearance of the display is the same as FIG. **11A** with the addition of an exemplary clear shot indicator **950**, shown in this embodiment as the words "CLEAR SHOT." In this embodiment, the device **10** has automatically determined that there are no obstacles at any point in the projectile trajectory **2** path (see, for example, FIG. **7D**)

Thus, the information from the display provides an explicit indication to the user **100** that a clear shot can be taken. Further, the user **100** can lower the device **10** and pick up the weapon, for example, bow **102** and match the corresponding bow sight pins (e.g. twenty-yard pin **220** and forty-yard pin **240**, respectively) to the same positions that were visualized relative to the optical image seen in the device **10**.

FIG. **11C** is exemplary schematic view of a target **T** and obstacles (**710**, **720**, **730**) observed while looking through the device **10**, including yet another embodiment of a display illuminating the distance indicator **910**, a twenty-yard indicator **920**, a forty-yard indicator **940**, an optional don't shoot indicator **960**, and an alternative not clear indicator **970**. The situation is similar to the situation of FIGS. **7D**, **11A** and **11B**; however in this example, the bald eagle **720** located at twenty yards and is located in projectile trajectory. The appearance of the display is similar to as FIG. **11B** except that the clear shot indicator **950** is not illuminated but instead the not clear indicator **970**, in this embodiment show as the words "NOT CLEAR," is illuminated. In one embodiment, the don't shoot indicator **960**, in this embodiment shown as a circle with a diagonal line through it, is superimposed over the obstacle, e.g. bald eagle **720**, in the place of the twenty-yard indicator **920**. In these embodiments, the device **10** has automatically determined that there is an obstacle in the projectile trajectory **2** path. Thus, the information from the display provides an explicit indication to the user **100** that a clear shot cannot be taken.

FIG. **11D** is exemplary schematic view of a target **T** and obstacles (**710**, **720**, **730**) observed while looking through the device **10**, including a simpler embodiment of a display illuminating the distance indicator **910**, and one or more don't shoot indicators **960**. The situation is similar to the situation of FIG. **11C** where the bald eagle **720** located at twenty yards and is located in projectile trajectory. However, in this embodiment when the projectile trajectory **2** is not clear, a don't shoot indicator **960** is superimposed over the obstacle, e.g. bald eagle **720**. If more than one obstacle is in the projectile trajectory **2**, multiple don't shoot indicators **960** may be displayed. In this embodiment when the path is not clear, the trajectory indicators, such as the twenty-yard indicator **920** and/or the forty-yard indicator **940** are not illuminated. In this simpler embodiment, the device **10** has automatically determined that there are one or more obstacles in the projectile trajectory **2** path. Thus, the information from the display provides an explicit indication to the user **100** that a clear shot cannot be taken and the problematic obstacle is indicated by a corresponding don't shoot indicator **960**.

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The user can change the position of the device **10** until the don't shoot indicator **960** is cleared and the clear shot indicators return (such as shown in FIG. **11A** or **11B**).

Methods for Determining and Displaying a Clear Shot

Some method aspects of the present invention will be explained with specific reference to FIGS. **12**, **13A**, and **13B**.

FIG. **12** illustrates an exemplary projectile trajectory for targets at three different distances. As discussed above, it is well known that a projectile trajectory follows a parabolic or ballistic trajectory. The parabolic curve is generally determined by the force of gravity on the projectile. Further, air drag reduces the projectile's velocity and affects the curve. As disclosed in the patent referenced above, the information to accurately identify the trajectory for a given weapon and projectile combination may be entered in the device **10** by a user during configuration or may be looked up using a means of a database or table lookup. Additionally, as will be discussed later the device **10** can be calibrated to match the specific trajectory of a individual's bow and bow sight which has been calibrated a specific individual to match their individual strength, form, and bow handling.

Once the trajectory is known for a particular projectile, the curve is represented in the device by a mathematical formula, such that any point along the projectile trajectory may be calculated. FIG. **12** shows three exemplary points, namely point **Pa**, point **Pb**, and point **Pc**. A shot taken at angle **A** (shown as theta **a**) along line of departure **1a** will travel along projectile trajectory segment **2a** until it intercepts target **Ta** (shown as **T₂₀**) at a horizontal distance of twenty yards along line of sight **3a**. A shot taken at angle **B** (shown as theta **b**) along line of departure **1b** will travel along projectile trajectory segment **2b** until it intercepts target **Tb** (shown as **T₄₀**) at a horizontal distance of forty yards along line of sight **3b**. A shot taken at angle **C** (shown as theta **c**) along line of departure **1c** will travel along projectile trajectory segment **2c** until it intercepts target **Tc** (shown as **T₆₀**) at a horizontal distance of sixty yards along line of sight **3c**.

When FIGS. **7B** and **7C** are considered, FIG. **12** also reveals that a shot could be taken from point **Pb** and intersect target **Ta** (shown as **T₂₀**) at a horizontal distance (second range) of thirty yards and a positive angle line of sight **3+**. Further, a shot could be taken from point **B** and intersect target **Tc** (shown as **T₆₀**) at a horizontal distance (second range) of fifty yards and a negative angle line of sight **3-**. According, once the projectile trajectory is known any angle of line of sight **3** and sensed range (first range) can be used to calculate the horizontal distance (second range) to any point in the projectile trajectory.

FIG. **13A** illustrates how the exemplary trajectories and angles of FIG. **12** are used to dynamically determine the display locations for the path indicators **930**, such as the twenty-yard indicator **920** and/or the forty-yard indicator **940**.

FIG. **13A** illustrates the projectile trajectory segments **2a**, **2b**, and **2c**, respectively, from FIG. **12** transposed such that the departure points are aligned at zero on the range scale (**x**-axis), common point **P₀**. The corresponding lines of departure **1a**, **1b**, and **1c**, respectively, are also transposed such that the departure points are aligned at point **P₀**. The horizontal line of sight **3** is the now the same for all three trajectories and becomes the **x**-axis. In this example, the **x**-axis has unit of yards. The **y**-axis on the left also has units of yards.

Line of departure **1c** is a parabolic tangent of the projectile trajectory **2c** that intersects the parabola at point **P₀** at (0, 0).

FIG. **13A** also shows dashed lines, twenty-yard projection **420** and forty-yard projection **440**, showing the angle from the point of departure to the intersection of a vertical twenty-

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yard line **320** (at point P_{20}) and a forty-yard line **340** (at point P_{40}), respectively. Further, superimposed on the curves and angles of FIG. **13A** is a perspective view of a section of the display **30** showing how the location of the path indicators are determined. The cross hairs **900** are shown where the line of sight **3** is projected on the display **30**. The distance indicator **910** shows the sensed range, for example, of sixty yards. One of the plurality of selectable path indicators **930** (FIG. **10**) is illuminated based on where the twenty-yard projection **420** line corresponds to the relative position on the display **30**. Another of the plurality of selectable path indicators **930** (FIG. **10**) is illuminated based on where the forty-yard projection **440** line corresponds to the relative position on the display **30**. The y-axis on the right relates to the scale of the display **30** also has units of millimeters.

The projectile trajectory **2** will vary based on many parameters related to the weapon, such a bow type, the projectile, the user, and the range and angle to the target. In the example shown in FIG. **13A**, the projectile trajectory **2c** has a vertex V_c at (30, 11.25), P_{20} at (20, 10), and P_{40} at (40, 10). The origin, point P_0 is at (0, 0). The line of departure **1c** intersects the twenty-yard line **320** at (20, 15). In this example, angle θ_c is 36.9 degrees, angle θ_{20} is 26.6 degrees, and angle θ_{40} is 14.0 degrees. The exemplary conversion factor from the real world (left y-axis) to the scale of the display **30** chip (right y-axis) is 5 yards=1 millimeter. Once angle θ_{20} and angle θ_{40} calculated, the corresponding one of the plurality of selectable path indicators **930** are turned on for the twenty-yard indicator **920** and the forty-yard indicator **940**, respectively (e.g. at 6 millimeters and 3 millimeters, respectively).

The line of departure **1c** is a parabolic tangent of the projectile trajectory **2c** that intersects the parabola at point P_0 at (0, 0). The slope of the parabolic tangent **1c**, or m_c , is found by calculation the tangent, namely opposite over adjacent, in this example 45/60 or 0.75. The equation for line of departure **1c** is $y=m*x+b$, in this example, $y=0.75x$. The angle of each line is found by using the inverse tangent (\arctan or \tan^{-1}), function. In this example, $\theta_c=\arctan(0.75)=36.9$ degrees.

The tangent of the twenty-yard projection **420** line is 30/60 or 0.5 and angle is $\arctan(0.5)$ or 26.6 degrees. The tangent of the forty-yard projection **440** line is 15/60 or 0.25 and angle is $\arctan(0.25)$ or 14.0 degrees.

In this example, the values for the parabolic equations for projectile trajectory **2c** are:

$$\begin{aligned} h &= 30 \\ k &= 11.25 \\ A &= -0.0125 \\ B &= 0.75 \\ C &= 0 \end{aligned}$$

The standard form equation is:

$$y = -0.0125x^2 + 0.75x$$

The vertex form equation is:

$$y = -0.0125(x-30)^2 + 11.25$$

The true aim point is 45 yards above the target or 9 millimeters on the display (right y-axis). The maximum indicator **980** is illuminated (shown just above the calculated point, but would be more precisely displayed on a high-resolution display **31** embodiment).

FIG. **13B** illustrates the projectile trajectory segments **2a** and **2b**, respectively, from FIG. **12** transposed such that the departure points are aligned at zero on the range scale (x-axis). The corresponding lines of departure **1a** and **1b**, respectively, are also transposed such that the departure points are aligned at P_0 . The horizontal line of sight **3** is the now the same for both trajectories and becomes the x-axis.

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FIG. **13B** also shows a dashed line, a twenty-yard projection **420**, showing the angle from the point of departure to the intersection of a vertical twenty-yard line **320** (at point P_{20}). As in FIG. **13A**, superimposed on the curves and angles of FIG. **13B** is a perspective view of a section of the display **30** showing how the location of a single twenty-yard indicator **920** is determined. The cross hairs **900** are shown where the line of sight **3** is projected on the display **30**. The distance indicator **910** shows the sensed range, for example, of forty yards. One of the plurality of selectable path indicators **930** (FIG. **10**) is illuminated based on where the twenty-yard projection **420** line corresponds to the relative position on the display **30**.

Focusing now on a comparison of the two sections of the display **30** shown is FIGS. **13A** and **13B**. Both indicate that one of the plurality of selectable path indicators **930** (FIG. **10**) is illuminated based on where the twenty-yard projection **420** line hits the display. More specifically, the computing element **16** (FIG. **3**) uses a mathematical model representation of the curves, angles and lines shown in FIGS. **13A** and/or **13B** in memory **18**, calculates the relative distance from the cross hairs **900** to the computed point that the twenty-yard projection **420** would appear on the computed representation (or model), and uses the relative distance to selectively illuminate the appropriate one of the plurality of selectable path indicators **930**. In FIG. **13A**, the illuminated path indicator **930** is near the top of the display **30** (see twenty-yard indicator **920**). In contrast, in FIG. **13B** the target is closer, such that the illuminated path indicator **930** is near the cross hairs **900** of the display **30** (see twenty-yard indicator **920**). Thus, an aspect of the invention is that the path indicators **930**, such as the twenty-yard indicator **920**, are displayed dynamically based on the projectile trajectory **2** and sensed range, and correspond to the relative distance above of the target **T** and obstacles **700** upon which the display is superimposed. Further, in bow mode, the path indicators correspond the individual user's bow **102** and bow sight **110** (FIG. **1**).

Range-finder Device

FIG. **14** is a rear perspective view of an exemplary range-finder device **10**. FIG. **15** is a front perspective view of the range-finder device **10** of FIG. **15**. FIG. **3** shows the internal components.

For instance, the user may look through the eyepiece **22**, align the target **T**, view the target **T**, and generally simultaneously view the display **30** to determine the first range, the angle, the clear shot indications, and/or other relevant information. The generally simultaneous viewing of the target **T** and the relevant information enables the user to quickly and easily determine ranges and ballistic information corresponding to various targets by moving the device **10** in an appropriate direction and dynamically viewing the change in the relevant information on the display **30**.

The portable handheld housing **20** houses the range sensor **12**, tilt sensor **14**, computing element **16**, and/or other desired elements such as the display **30**, one or more inputs **32**, eyepiece **22**, lens **24**, laser emitter, laser detector, etc. The handheld housing **20** enables the device **10** be easily and safely transported and maneuvered for convenient use in a variety of locations.

For example, the portable handheld housing **20** may be easily transported in a backpack for use in the field. Additionally, the location of the components on or within the housing **20**, such as the position of the eyepiece **22** on the proximate end **28** of the device **10**, the position of the lens **24** on the distal end **26** of the device, and the location of the inputs **32**, enables the device **10** to be easily and quickly operated by the user with one hand without a great expenditure of time or effort.

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As discussed in reference to FIG. 3, generally a rangefinder device **10** generally includes a range sensor **12** for determining a first range to a target T, a tilt sensor **14** for determining an angle to the target T, a computing element **16** coupled with the range sensor **12** and the tilt sensor **14** for determining ballistic information relating to the target T based on the first range and the determined angle, a memory **18** for storing data such as ballistic information and a computer program to control the functionality of the device **10**, and a portable handheld housing **20** for housing the range sensor **12**, the tilt sensor **14**, the computing element **16**, the memory **18**, and other components.

A computer program preferably controls input and operation of the device **10**. The computer program includes at least one code segment stored in or on a computer-readable medium residing on or accessible by the device **10** for instructing the range sensor **12**, tilt sensor **14**, computing element **16**, and any other related components to operate in the manner described herein. The computer program is preferably stored within the memory **18** and comprises an ordered listing of executable instructions for implementing logical functions in the device **10**. However, the computer program may comprise programs and methods for implementing functions in the device **10** which are not an ordered listing, such as hard-wired electronic components, programmable logic such as field-programmable gate arrays (FPGAs), application specific integrated circuits, conventional methods for controlling the operation of electrical or other computing devices, etc.

Similarly, the computer program may be embodied in any computer-readable medium for use by or in connection with an instruction execution system, apparatus, or device, such as a computer-based system, processor-containing system, or other system that can fetch the instructions from the instruction execution system, apparatus, or device, and execute the instructions.

The device **10** and computer programs described herein are merely examples of a device and programs that may be used to implement the present invention and may be replaced with other devices and programs without departing from the scope of the present invention.

The range sensor **12** may be any conventional sensor or device for determining range. The first range may correspond to a line of sight **3** between the device **10** and the target T. Preferably, the range sensor **12** is a laser range sensor which determines the first range to the target by directing a laser beam at the target T, detecting a reflection of the laser beam, measuring the time required for the laser beam to reach the target and return to the range sensor **12**, and calculating the first range of the target T from the range sensor **12** based on the measured time.

The range sensor **12** may alternatively or additionally include other range sensing components, such as conventional optical, radio, sonar, or visual range sensing devices to determine the first range in a substantially conventional manner.

The tilt sensor **14** is operable to determine the angle to the target T from the device **10** relative to the horizontal. As discussed in reference to FIGS. 7A, 7B, and 7C, the tilt sensor is used to determine the angle of the line of sight **3**. The tilt sensor **14** preferably determines the angle by sensing the orientation of the device **10** relative to the target T and the horizontal.

The tilt sensor **14** preferably determines the angle by sensing the orientation of the device **10** relative to the target T and the horizontal as a user **100** of the device **10** aligns the device **10** with the target T and views the target T through an eyepiece **22** and an opposed lens **24**.

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For example, if the target T is above the device **10** (e.g. FIG. 7B), the user of the device **10** would tilt the device **10** such that a distal end **26** of the device **10** would be raised relative to a proximate end **28** of the device **10** and the horizontal. Similarly, if the target T is below the device **10** (e.g. FIG. 7C), the user of the device **10** would tilt the device **10** such that the distal end **26** of the device **10** would be lowered relative to the proximate end **28** of the device and the horizontal.

The tilt sensor **14** preferably determines the angle of the target to the device **10** based on the amount of tilt, that is the amount the proximate end **28** is raised or lowered relative to the distal end **26**, as described below. The tilt sensor **14** may determine the tilt of the device, and thus the angle, through various orientation determining elements. For instance, the tilt sensor **14** may utilize one or more single-axis or multiple-axis magnetic tilt sensors to detect the strength of a magnetic field around the device **10** or tilt sensor **14** and then determine the tilt of the device **10** and the angle accordingly. The tilt sensor **14** may determine the tilt of the device using other or additional conventional orientation determine elements, including mechanical, chemical, gyroscopic, and/or electronic elements, such as a resistive potentiometer.

Preferably, the tilt sensor **14** is an electronic inclinometer, such as a clinometer, operable to determine both the incline and decline of the device **10** such that the angle may be determined based on the amount of incline or decline. Thus, as the device **10** is aligned with the target T by the user, and the device **10** is tilted such that its proximate end **28** is higher or lower than its distal end **26**, the tilt sensor **14** will detect the amount of tilt which is indicative of the angle.

The computing element **16** is coupled with the range sensor **12** and the tilt sensor **14** to determine ballistic information relating to the target T, including clear shot information, as is discussed herein. The computing element **16** may be a microprocessor, microcontroller, or other electrical element or combination of elements, such as a single integrated circuit housed in a single package, multiple integrated circuits housed in single or multiple packages, or any other combination. Similarly, the computing element **16** may be any element that is operable to determine clear shot information from the range and angle information as well as other information as described herein. Thus, the computing element **16** is not limited to conventional microprocessor or microcontroller elements and may include any element that is operable to perform the functions described.

The memory **18** is coupled with the computing element **16** and is operable to store the computer program and a database including ranges, projectile drop values, and configuration information. The memory **18** may be, for example, an electronic, magnetic, optical, electromagnetic, infrared, or semiconductor system, apparatus, device, or propagation medium.

The device **10** also preferably includes a display **30** to indicate relevant information such as the cross hairs **900**, distance indicator **910**, selectable path indicators **930**, clear shot indicator **950**, don't shoot indicator **960**, not clear indicator **970**. The display **30** may be a conventional electronic display, such as a LED, TFT, or LCD display. Preferably, the display **30** is viewed by looking through the eyepiece **22** such that the user may align the target T and simultaneously view relevant information, as shown in FIG. 10. The illuminated segments may be parallel to the optical path (e.g. horizontal) between the eyepiece **22** and the opposed lens **24** and reflect to a piece of angled glass in the optical path.

The inputs **32** are coupled with the computing element **16** to enable users or other devices to share information with the device **10**. The inputs **32** are preferably positioned on the

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housing 20 to enable the user to simultaneously view the display 30 through the eyepiece 22 and function the inputs 32.

The inputs 32 preferably comprise one or more functionable inputs such as buttons, switches, scroll wheels, etc., a touch screen associated with the display 30, voice recognition elements, pointing devices such as mice, touchpads, trackballs, styluses, combinations thereof, etc. Further, the inputs 32 may comprise wired or wireless data transfer elements.

In operation, the user aligns the device 10 with the target T and views the target T on the display 30. The device 10 may provide generally conventional optical functionality, such as magnification or other optical modification, by utilizing the lens 24 and/or the computing element 16. Preferably, the device 10 provides an increased field of vision as compared to conventional riflescopes to facilitate conventional rangefinding functionality. The focal magnification, typically is 4×, 5×, 7×, 12× and so forth. In some embodiments the magnification factor is variable, such as with a zoom feature. This magnification value is used by the computing element 16 in performing the mapping of the various indicators on the optical image as discussed in reference to FIG. 13A.

Further, the user may function the inputs 32 to control the operation of the device 10. For example, the user may activate the device 10, provide configuration information as discussed below, and/or determine a first range, a second range, angle, and ballistic information by functioning one or more of the inputs 32.

For instance, the user may align the target T by centering the reticle over the target T and functioning at least one of the inputs 32 to cause the range sensor 12 to determine the first range. Alternatively, the range sensor 12 may dynamically determine the first range for all aligned objects such that the user is not required to function the inputs 32 to determine the first range. Similarly, the tilt sensor 14 may dynamically determine the angle for all aligned objects or the tilt sensor may determine the angle when the user functions at least one of the inputs 32. Thus, the clear shot information discussed herein may be dynamically displayed to the user.

In various embodiments, the device 10 enables the user to provide configuration information. The configuration information includes mode information to enable the user to select between various projectile modes, such as bow hunting and firearm modes. Further, the configuration information may include projectile information, such as a bullet size, caliber, grain, shape, type, etc. and firearm caliber, size, type, sight-in distance, etc.

The user may provide the configuration information to the device 10 by functioning the inputs 32.

Further, the memory 18 may include information corresponding to configuration information to enable the user-provided configuration information to be stored by the memory 18.

In various embodiments, the device 10 is operable to determine a second range to the target T and display an indication of the second range to the user. The computing element 16 determines the second range to the target T by adjusting the first range based upon the angle. Preferably, the computing element 16 determines the second range by multiplying the first range by the sine or cosine of the angle. For instance, when the hunter is positioned above the target, the first range is multiplied by the sine of the angle to determine the second range. When the hunter is positioned below the target, the first range is multiplied by the cosine of the angle to determine the second range.

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Thus, the second range preferably represents a horizontal distance the projectile must travel such that the estimated trajectory of the projectile generally intersects with the target T.

5 Flow Chart for Determining a Clear Shot

The device 10 may provide clear shot indications using various methods. As discussed above, in some embodiments, a rangefinder device 10 may be operated by a user 100 to manually determine whether or not there is a clear shot.

10 FIG. 16 is a flow chart for a method of using a rangefinder device 10 to determine a clear shot.

The user 100 operates the device 10 input 32 to determine the first range to the target T in a range target step 62. In step 62, the device 10 displays the first range in the distance indicator 910 and dynamically displays the applicable, path indicators, such as the twenty-yard indicator 920 and forty-yard indicator 940.

In observe obstacles step 64, the user 100 then observes the obstacles that appear between the top path indicator and the cross hairs 900.

In range obstacle step 66, the user 100 finds the range of the first obstacle. Then in more obstacles decision 68, more for obstacles were observed, the flow continues along redo path 60, where the user 100 finds the range of the next obstacle until all potential obstacles have been ranged.

Finally, in a confirm clear shot step 70, the user ranges the target T again and confirms that the obstacle(s) are clear of the projectile trajectory as indicated by the path indicators, such as the twenty-yard indicator 920 and forty-yard indicator 940, in relation the obstacle range(s) obtained in the range obstacle step 66.

Flow Chart for Automatically Determining and Displaying a Clear Shot Indication

35 FIG. 17 is a flow chart for a fully automated method of determining a clear shot and providing a clear shot indication.

First, in a determine range step 72, the device 10 determines the first range to the target T.

In a determine angle step 74, the device 10 determines the angle to the target T.

In a calculate trajectory step 76, the computing element 16 of the device 10 uses the first range and angle, as well as configured weapon and projectile information, to determine a computed model for the projectile trajectory (see, for example, FIGS. 13A and 13B).

In a scan trajectory path step 78, the device 10 uses the range sensor 12 to scan each point along projectile trajectory to determine if an obstacle is found in the projectile trajectory. In one embodiment, the device 10 internally moves the range sensor 12 between the line of sight 3 and the line departure 1. In another embodiment, the user 100 is prompted to tilt the device 10 up slowly until the line of departure is reached. In the later embodiment, the device 10 keeps track in memory 18 each angle that is successfully ranged. If the user 100 moved the device 10 faster than the device could range each angle, the user is prompted to repeat the device tilt motion until all the necessary angles are ranged. For each angle a record is made in memory 18 of whether or not an obstacle was encountered at the distance which corresponds to the projectile trajectory.

In an obstacle-in-path decision 80, memory 18 is checked to see if any obstacle was found in the projectile trajectory.

If any obstacle was found in the projectile trajectory, flow continues along a yes path 82 to a warn not clear step 84. As discussed above, the not clear warning can be provided in various ways. In the embodiments shown in FIGS. 11C and 19B, the not clear indicator 970 can be illuminated. In the

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embodiments shown in FIGS. 11C and 11D, the don't shoot indicator **960** can be displayed over each obstacle.

Otherwise, if no obstacle was found in the projectile trajectory, flow continues along a no path **86** to an indicate clear shot step **88**. As discussed above, the clear shot indication can be provided in various ways. In the embodiment shown in FIG. 11A the path indicators, such as the twenty-yard indicator **920** and forty-yard indicator **940**, are displayed with no obstacles shown. In the embodiment shown in FIG. 11B the path indicators, such as the twenty-yard indicator **920** and forty-yard indicator **940**, are displayed with no obstacles shown and the clear shot indicator **950** is explicitly illuminated.

Steps for Calibrating a Device to a Specific User's Bow and Bow Sight

FIGS. 18A through 18C illustrates the steps in a method for calibrating a rangefinder device **10** to a specific user's bow **102** and bow sight **110**.

Typically a user will use a paper target **180** at known distances to set one or more bow sight pins, such as twenty-yard pin **220**, forty-yard pin **240**, sixty-yard pin **260** (FIG. 2).

The following steps may be used to calibrate the device **10** to correspond to a specific user's bow sight **110**.

As shown in FIG. 18A, the user **100**, places an exemplary paper target **180**, shown as a conventional archery target with concentric rings, at sixty yards. The user **100** then aims the bow **102** placing the sixty-yard pin **260** over the center of the paper target **180**. The user observes where the twenty-yard pin **220** and the forty-yard pin **240** appear on the paper target **180**.

Next, as shown in FIG. 18B the user **100** (or an assistant) places a mark where each pin appeared at sixty yards. For example, a twenty-yard mark **182** and a forty-yard mark **184**, respectively, are shown on the target in FIG. 18B.

Next, as shown in FIG. 18C, the user **100** holds the device **10** at the same sixty yard distance and enters bow calibration mode. The distance indicator **910** should read sixty yards. In some embodiments, the device **10** will prompt the user **100** to position the twenty-yard indicator **920** over the twenty-yard mark **182**. After the prompt, each time the user **100** operates an input **32** the next one of the plurality of selectable path indicators **930** will be illuminated. The user **100** will continue to adjust the position of the illuminated selectable path indicators **930** until it matches the twenty-yard mark **182** on the paper target **180**. Once the first path indicator is calibrated, then the device **10** prompts the user **100** to position the next path indicator, for example, the forty-yard indicator **940** over the forty-yard mark **184**, in a similar manner, until all the pins have been calibrated.

Based on this calibration information the device **10** can determine the parabolic curve (projectile trajectory) applicable to the user's specific bow **102** and bow sight **110**.

In a simpler embodiment, corresponding to FIGS. 9A and 9B only, the device **10** operates with only a single path indicator, such as only the twenty-yard indicator **920**. Correspondingly, an alternate calibration method is simpler as well. In this simpler embodiment, the paper target **180** is positioned at forty yards. The distance indicator **910** should read forty yards. The paper target is marked only with the twenty-yard mark **182**. Next, the device **10** will prompt the user **100** to position the twenty-yard indicator **920** over the twenty-yard mark **182**, whereupon the calibration is complete.

Calibration Sheet for Calibrating a Device to a Specific User's Bow and Bow Sight

FIGS. 18D and 18E illustrates an alternate method for calibrating a rangefinder device **10** to a specific user's bow **102** and bow sight **110** using a calibration sheet **190**.

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When calibration is done in the field with a target as described above, the user typically has a bow, an arrow, and a target that can be shot to confirm the calibration with an actual arrow. However, field verification is not required. Calibration can be performed in a smaller space, even indoors, using only the rangefinder device **10**, the bow **102** with a bow sight **110**, and a calibration sheet **190**. This assumes that the user has already adjusted the bow sight **110** at known distances to set one or more bow sight pins, such as twenty-yard pin **220**, forty-yard pin **240**, sixty-yard pin **260** (FIG. 2).

The steps are similar to those above as described regarding the simpler embodiment with only the twenty-yard indicator **920**, except that the calibration sheet **190** is already marked and the user moves the bow **102** and the rangefinder relative to the calibration sheet **190**.

FIG. 18D shows a calibration sheet **190** having a twenty-yard calibration mark **192**, a forty-yard calibration mark **194**, and calibration instructions **198**. The calibration sheet **190** can be a standard 8.5x11 sheet of paper or smaller. The twenty-yard calibration mark **192** in this example is shown labeled "20 PIN" and the forty-yard calibration mark **194** is labeled "40 PIN". Optionally, calibration instructions **198** can be provided on the calibration sheet **190**. Example instructions could read, "ClearShot™ Calibration with 20 and 40 Yard Bow Sight Pins: Calibration for your specific bow using this method requires you to stand the correct distance from this calibration sheet. 1) Start about 10 yards from this calibration sheet. 2) In the shooting position, move forward or backward until your 20 and 40 yard bow sight pins match the 20 and 40 pin marks on this calibration sheet. 3) Put the rangefinder in calibration mode. Align the rangefinder's cross hairs with the cross hairs mark labeled '40 PIN' on this calibration sheet. Adjust the rangefinder's ClearShot™ indicator to match the '20 PIN' mark on this calibration sheet."

FIG. 18E is a simplified version of FIG. 13B with the addition of the calibration sheet **190**. The other elements are the same as described in reference to FIG. 13B. FIG. 18E shows how the angle θ_{20} for a twenty-yard indicator **920** is the same on a 40 yard field target as it is on the calibration sheet **190** at about ten yards. In one embodiment of a calibration sheet the twenty-yard calibration mark **192** and the forty-yard calibration mark **194** are pre-marked about 4.25 inches apart. The distance between the marks is arbitrary but 4.25 inches corresponds to a calibration sheet distance of about ten yards for most bows, which is short enough to be easy to work with (even indoors), and which is far enough for reasonable calibration accuracy. The same sheet would also work if the calibration units were meters instead of yards.

As shown in FIG. 18E angle θ_{20} for the specific's bow twenty-yard pin **220** and forty-yard pin **240** would be visualized the same at 40 yards using twenty-yard projection **420** as it would at any intermediate point where the calibration sheet may be placed relative to the rangefinder device **10** (at zero). Thus by positioning the user's eye relative to the calibration sheet marks to create this angle θ_{20} will allow the user the place the rangefinder device **10** in the exact same point and position the twenty-yard indicator **920** to the same visual angle in calibration mode. Slower bows or arrows will have a higher projectile trajectory and thus the twenty-yard indicator **920** will need to be adjusted higher so the user will correctly move closer to the calibration sheet than with faster bows or arrows.

The following steps may be used to calibrate the device **10** to correspond to a specific user's bow sight **110** using the calibration sheet **190**.

The user **100** places an exemplary calibration sheet **190** on a wall or door. The user **100** starts out standing about ten yards

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away from the calibration sheet 190 with the bow 102 and the rangefinder device 10. The user 100 then aims the bow 102 placing the forty-yard pin 240 over the forty-yard calibration mark 194. The user moves forward or backward until the twenty-yard pin 220 matches twenty-yard calibration mark 192 (while still aiming the forty-yard pin 240 at the forty-yard calibration mark 194). Without moving the user's eye position relative to the calibration sheet 190, the user 100 brings the rangefinder device 10 to the user's eye, aims the rangefinder device 10 placing the cross hairs 900 over the forty-yard calibration mark 194, and, while in 40-yard calibration mode, adjusts the twenty-yard indicator 920 to match the twenty-yard calibration mark 192. In some rangefinder devices 10 the user 100 could adjust the twenty-yard indicator 920 by pressing one or more buttons. In a high-resolution rangefinder with a touch screen, the user could simply tap the correct height on the high-resolution display 31.

In an embodiment of the rangefinder device 10 with 60-yard calibration mode, an alternate calibration sheet 190 uses a sixty-yard calibration mark 196 instead of a forty-yard calibration mark 194. With this embodiment the user aims the bow 102 using the sixty-yard pin 260 and moves forward or backward until the twenty-yard pin 220 matches twenty-yard calibration mark 192. The user 100 brings the rangefinder device 10 to the user's eye, aims the rangefinder device 10 placing the cross hairs 900 over the sixty-yard calibration mark 196, and, while in 60-yard calibration mode, adjusts the twenty-yard indicator 920 to match the twenty-yard calibration mark 192. This 60-yard calibration mode allows for more precise calibration for faster bows and arrows. This alternate calibration sheet 190 for 60-yard calibration mode could be printed on the back of the calibration sheet 190 for 40-yard calibration mode.

Further, FIG. 18E further shows that any two points at a fixed distance could be used, for example in 40 yard calibration, to calibrate the rangefinder device 10. For example, if the calibration sheet 190 were lost or not available, the user 100 could pick two points on a wall or tree or other objects that correspond to twenty-yard pin 220 and the forty-yard pin 240. The user 100 aims the bow 102 placing the forty-yard pin 240 over the lower point. The user moves forward or backward until the twenty-yard pin 220 matches higher point. Without moving the user's eye position relative to the two points, the user 100 brings the rangefinder device 10 to the user's eye, aims the rangefinder device 10 placing the cross hairs 900 over the lower point, and, while in 40-yard calibration mode, adjusts the twenty-yard indicator 920 to match the higher point.

Reverse Application

The method by which the path indicators, such as the twenty-yard indicator 920 and/or the forty-yard indicator 940, are used to calibrate the device 10 (by determining the corresponding projectile trajectory 2) may be understood by reference to FIG. 13A. Essentially, the method used to determine the location of the path indicators based on the projectile trajectory 2 is reversed.

The calibrated locations, for example, the twenty-yard indicator 920 and/or the forty-yard indicator 940 indicate the height on the millimeter y-axis of the corresponding project lines, for example, the twenty-yard projection 420 line and optionally the forty-yard projection 440 line. The projection line(s) are modeled starting at the origin point P_0 (0, 0) and ending at the projected points (e.g. 920 and/or 940) at the sixty-yard x-axis. The intersection points, P_{20} and P_{40} , respectively are then determined where the twenty-yard projection 420 line and optionally the forty-yard projection 440 line cross the twenty-yard line 320 and the forty-yard line

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340, respectively. The origin point P_0 (0, 0), and the twenty-yard intersection point P_{20} (20, y_{20}) are then used to calculate the parabola. If the forty-yard intersection point P_{40} (40, y_{40}) is also used, the difference between y_{20} and y_{40} will provide an indication of the air drag impact on the projectile trajectory 2. Thus, the projectile trajectory 2 that corresponds to an individual user's bow 102 and bow sight 110 is determined.

In the example shown in FIG. 13A, the twenty-yard indicator 920 is calibrated at six millimeters (on the display y-axis). This corresponds to thirty yards based on the focal range conversion. The tangent is 30/60 or 0.5. The inverse tangent function provides the angle of the twenty-yard projection 420 line, θ_{20} $\arctan(0.5)$ equals 26.6 degrees. This angle can then be used to calculate the twenty-yard intersection point P_{20} . Once P_{20} is known, the corresponding parabolic equation is determined using y_{20} in the equation explained below.

Alternatively, in yet another calibration method, the user 100 can compare the bow sight pins (220, 240, 260) to a printed set of common settings and then enter associated values or code to provide the device with corresponding projectile trajectory 2 data. The code can be used to perform a lookup of the projectile trajectory 2.

In yet another calibration embodiment, the user 100 measures the distance between the twenty-yard pin 220 and the forty-yard pin 240, and the distance between the forty-yard pin 240 and the sixty-yard pin 260 and enters those values into the device 10. The device 10 uses those values, in a method similar to one described above, to calculate the corresponding projectile trajectory 2, or to lookup the projectile trajectory 2 in a table stored in memory 18.

Single Point Sufficient

Conventionally, it is understood that to determine a parabola three points must be known. This is because in either the standard form or the vertex form there are three variables in addition to the x and y values for the points (namely, A, B, and C in standard form or A, h, and k in vertex form). However, with the model, methods, and devices disclosed herein, only one value, specifically the y_{20} , is needed to determine the parabola.

In reference to the model shown in FIG. 13A, and the calibration methods discussed in reference to FIGS. 18A through 18C, the origin point P_0 is always (0, 0) and the T point is always (60, 0). Using these values for x_0 , y_0 , y_{60} and y_{60} two of the unknowns may be solved with A remaining as the only unknown. The x value of the twenty-yard intersection point P_{20} (20, y_{20}) is always 20. Thus, only a single equation with a single value, y_{20} is needed to determine all the other variables in the standard or vertex form of parabolic equations.

The single equation to find A based on y_{20} is as follows:

$$A = -y_{20}^2 / 800$$

Once A is known, the other equations are:

$$B = 0.075 y_{20}$$

$$C = 0$$

$$h = -B / 2A = 30$$

$$k = C - B^2 / 4A = -B^2 / 4A = 1.125 y_{20}$$

Two Points Provide Air Drag Adjustment

In our model, if there were no air drag, height of the projectile trajectory 2 would be the same at both the twenty-yard intersection point P_{20} (20, y_{20}) and the forty-yard intersection point P_{40} (40, y_{40}), y_{20} equals y_{40} . If y_{20} does not equal y_{40} , the difference between y_{20} and y_{40} will provide an indi-

cation of the air drag impact on the projectile trajectory 2. Thus if the user provides a second point, the device 10 can determine the affect of air drag on the projectile and adjust the projectile trajectory 2 and clear shot indications according.

Air drag calculations are very complex and a table look up is often used to apply the air drag adjustments to the true parabolic values. In a embodiment which uses a second calibration point the difference between y_{20} and y_{40} is used with other projectile data to select a table of adjustment values which are then applied to the true parabolic values to map out the adjusted projectile trajectory 2.

In a smart rangefinder embodiment described below, a dynamic table of air drag values is filled in based on analysis of an actual video of an individual projectile shot in a known environment, such as the sixty yard paper target 180 of FIG. 18C.

User's Perception of the Highest Point in the Projectile Trajectory

FIG. 18F is a simplified, enlarged version of FIG. 13B with the addition of a user 100, a bow 102, and a perception line 5. The other elements are the same as described in reference to FIG. 13B. The perception line 5 is the line from the user's eye to the point seen over the target T as indicated by the twenty-yard indicator 920. The perception line 5 is different than the line of sight 3b, which is the line from the arrow 104 or the rangefinder device 10 to the target T (e.g. see FIGS. 7A through 7D). The bow 102 and arrow 104 are aimed using the twenty-yard indicator 920, which places the arrow 104 on line of departure 1b. The arrow will follow the projectile trajectory 2b and hit the target T (not shown) visualized in the center of the cross hairs 900. The true maximum height will be at vertex Vb. However, because user's eye is higher than the arrow 104, FIG. 18F shows that the arrow will appear to raise up to the perception line 5 (about the perceived height of the twenty-yard indicator 920) and then, after twenty-yards, appear to drop down quickly into the target. Although FIG. 18F only illustrates the forty-yard case, at other distances such as sixty yards and eighty yards, generally the twenty-yard indicator 920, which will be higher (e.g. compare FIG. 13A to FIG. 13B), still is perceived to be the maximum height of the projectile trajectory (e.g. 2c in FIG. 13A). Thus, any object that appears to be close to the twenty-yard indicator 920, along perception line 5, during the first twenty yards will likely be an obstacle and make the shot not a clear shot. Further, any object that appears to be above the twenty-yard indicator 920 at any point will not be an obstacle. Thus, the twenty-yard indicator 920 (and substantially similarly a twenty-meter indicator) provides both an aiming point 982 (FIG. 11A) and an indication of what the user 100 will perceive as the highest point in the projectile trajectory 2b allowing the user 100 to determine whether or not an obstacle is in the projectile trajectory 2b.

Alternative Displays

FIGS. 19A and 19B illustrates an embodiment of an alternative design for the display segments, including dynamic path indicators, including embodiments with twenty-yard and forty-yard indicators (920 and 940), maximum indicators 980, angle and second range indicator 990, bow mode indicator 992.

FIG. 19A shows an alternative design for display 30. In addition the display elements discussed above in relation to FIG. 10, one or more of the following may be included in various embodiments of the display 30: the not clear indicator 970 (see also FIG. 11C), a plurality of maximum indicators 980, an angle and second range indicator 990, and/or a bow mode indicator 992.

A novel trajectory mode indicator 996 indicates that clear shot projectile trajectory information is being calculated and/or displayed.

Other modes could be displayed with different symbols, such as a rifle symbol to indicated rifle mode indicator 994 (not shown) or a group of bushes to indicate brush mode (not shown).

As shown in FIG. 19B only one of the plurality of maximum indicators 980 is illuminated to show the highest point in the projectile trajectory (this corresponds to the line of departure 1, for example, such as line 1c as shown in FIG. 13A).

The maximum indicator 980 is also the true aim point. A bow sight comprising a single pin aligned with the bow string sight 120 (shown in FIG. 1) would provide the user with a true aiming point. A bow with a true aim pin could be used with our clear shot technology to eliminate conventional bow sights, and would not need adjustment.

As discussed above, the twenty-yard indicator 920 is a twenty-yard pin aiming point 982. A bow sight comprising a single pin adjusted to be a twenty-yard pin 220 could be used with our clear shot technology to eliminate conventional bow sights, and would not need adjustment.

Also shown illuminated in FIG. 19B is the not clear indicator 970. In some embodiments, the word "CLEAR" in the clear shot indicator 950 is used in combination with the word "NOT" in the not clear indicator 970, to illuminate the words "NOT CLEAR" while the word "SHOT" is not illuminated. In other embodiments a large red circle with a back slash (similar to don't shoot indicator 960) could be superimposed over the entire circular focus area.

Also as shown illuminated in FIG. 19B are the optional angle and second range indicator 990 and the optional bow mode indicator 992. The other segments shown in FIG. 9C (900, 910, 920, and 940) are also shown illuminated.

FIG. 19C shows an additional feature which may be incorporated into display 30. In a currently preferred embodiment, as discussed above in reference to FIG. 9B, a minimal display comprises cross hairs 900 and the twenty-yard indicator 920 providing a twenty-yard pin aiming point 982. When the display 30 is used to provide an aiming point 982, it is important that the rangefinder device 10 is held leveled to gravity. If the rangefinder device 10 is rotated clockwise, the aiming point 982 will indicate a point lower and to the right of where the aiming point 982 should be. FIG. 19C shows the addition of a level 984, shown as a bubble level, to the display 30 so that the user can ensure that the rangefinder device 10 and its attached display 30 are leveled when matching the aiming point 982 to a point in the optical image. This feature helps the user select the proper point at which to aim.

FIG. 19D shows an alternative leveling feature that may be incorporated into display 30. As discussed above in reference to FIG. 9B, a minimal display comprises cross hairs 900 and the twenty-yard indicator 920 providing a twenty-yard pin aiming point 982. When the display 30 is used to provide an aiming point 982, it is important that the rangefinder device 10 is held leveled to gravity. If the rangefinder device 10 is rotated clockwise, the aiming point 982 will indicate a point lower and to the right of where the aiming point 982 should be. FIG. 19D shows the addition of selectively displayed rotation indicators 986a-b to the display 30 so that the user can ensure that the rangefinder device 10 and its attached display 30 are leveled when matching the aiming point 982 to a point in the optical image. If the display 30 is level, neither rotation indicator 986a nor rotation indicator 986b are illuminated. If the display needs to be rotated to the left (counterclockwise) to be level, rotation indicator 986a on the left will

be illuminated. If the display needs to be rotated to the right (clockwise) to be level, rotation indicator **986b** on the right will be illuminated. Once the display is level, the respective rotation indicator **986a** or **886b** disappear. Thus the rotation indicators **986a-b** will indicate the direction that the aiming point should be. The tilt sensor **14** (FIG. 3) works on one axis to determine the angle of the line of sight **3** (see FIGS. 7A through 7B). A second axis in tilt sensor **14** is used to determine rotation of the display **30**. If the display **30** is rotated counter clockwise or clockwise the respective rotation indicator (**986a** or **986b**) will be illuminated.

In one embodiment comprising rotation indicators **986a-b**, the aiming point **982** will not be displayed when the display **30** is not level.

In an alternate embodiment comprising rotation indicators **986a-b**, the aiming point **982** will be displayed in addition to the respective rotation indicator (**986a** or **986b**) when the display **30** is not level.

An embodiment of a high-resolution display **31**, which is part of a smart phone, such as the iPhone, could display a virtual level, such as a virtual bubble level. A virtual bubble level may graphically look and behave like a physical bubble level but would use an axis of a tilt sensor (gyroscope or accelerometer) to determine how to graphically display the virtual level.

Alternatively, an embodiment of a high-resolution display **31** which is part of a smart phone, such as the iPhone, would simply display the dynamically displayed aiming point **982** at the correct point regardless of the orientation of the display **31** relative to gravity; namely, the aiming point **982** would always be displayed directly above the cross hairs **900** (unless corrected for a cross wind, as discussed below in regards to FIG. 29).

FIG. 19E shows an additional feature which may be incorporated into display **30**. Above the selectable path indicators **930**, an off screen indicator **932** is provided to show, for example, that the twenty-yard indicator **920** would be off screen, in other words off the display **30**, for the currently ranged target T. This would happen if the projectile trajectory **2** for a given projectile is very high (e.g. the calibrated bow and arrow are relative slow) and/or if the target T is too far away.

The off screen indicator **932** can also be used in calibration mode to indicate to the user that the next indicator in the sequence will be the lowest indicator, in other words the calibration indicator will wrap around.

Another feature shown in FIG. 19E is that in calibration mode, the first seven segment display (show as an 8 in the hundreds position) in the distance indicator **910** can be used to display a "C" to indicate calibration mode while the other two seven segment displays (tens and ones positions) can be used in show the ordinal value of the calibration position. Namely, if the first indicator of the selectable path indicators **930** is selected, the distance indicator **910** could display "C 1" and, if the last of the exemplary 21 indicators is selected, the distance indicator **910** could display "C21". This is useful for a user who has multiple weapons. For example, a black powder rifle might have a calibration setting of "C 2", a high-end hunting bow may have a calibration setting of "C 9" and a recurve bow may have a calibration setting of "C18". The user will calibrate the rangefinder device **10** for each weapon using the calibration methods described above and then can write down the calibration setting value for each weapon. When switching between weapons, the user can quickly change the calibration setting to match the calibration value determined for the current weapon. This is also useful for different types of projectiles. A target arrow made of wood with feather vanes

may be slower than a hunting arrow with a carbon shaft and plastic vanes. Accordingly a different calibration setting may be needed for a slower arrow on the same bow.

Game Displays

One challenge to the adoption of the clear shot technology is the education of potential users and buyers on the use and benefits of the technology.

Yet another display aspect of the present invention is a game that simulates the operation of a device **10** having the clear shot technology. The game could operate as a computer program running on mobile device such as an Apple iPhone **11** or Google Droid; a gaming system such as a Sony PS3, Nintendo Wii, or Microsoft Xbox; or a general purpose computer such as a Apple Macintosh or a Wintel platform. The game could also be implemented as a Web based applet that would run inside a Web browser.

In one embodiment, the game would simulate the use of the device **10**, by created a virtual world with a plurality of targets and obstacles at different elevations and distances from a common center point. FIG. 20 shows an exemplary layout chart, or map, of such a virtual world. FIG. 20 is an overhead view which users contour lines to show higher and lower elevations (shown as 100 feet through 160 feet). Concentric circles show various ranges, such as ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty and sixty yards. Different situations are represented at various compass headings. For example, the situation shown is FIG. 7A is laid out at 90 degrees east, as indicated by the line labeled 7A. Likewise, the situation of FIG. 7B is laid out to the south (line 7B), the situation of FIG. 7C is laid out to the west (line 7C), and the situation of FIG. 7D is laid out to the north (line 7D). Further the don't shoot situation of FIG. 11C is laid out to the northwest. Other targets and obstacles are also illustrated on the chart. For improved enjoyment the targets could represent different objects such as deer, antelope, elk, moose, rabbit, skunks, coyote, lions, tigers, bears, and so forth. The obstacles and surrounding could include different environments such as eastern forest, jungle, desert, alpine, and so forth.

In an iPhone embodiment, the game uses the iPhone's motion sensors to determine a relative compass direction and tilt angle for the simulated device. As the game user moves the iPhone, different targets and obstacles come into view. When the user taps the screen over a range button (such as display input **34a** in FIG. 21), the display **30** of the simulated device **10** would calculate the projectile trajectory **2** and indicate a clear shot or not, as explained above. When the user taps the screen over a fire button (such as display input **34b** in FIG. 21), the display screen would show an animation changing the view from simulated eyepiece view, to a side view similar to the kind illustrated in FIG. 7A through 7D, or alternatively in FIG. 32. In some embodiments, the projectile's path could be animated, leaving a trail as it flies.

In other platforms, the game would use buttons or game controllers to move the simulated device **10** in different compass directions and to tilt the device **10** to view different potential targets. In a Wii embodiment, the Wii nunchuk controller could be used to simulate both the device **10** and the weapon, such as a bow **102**.

The game would contain data that models the virtual world, and would use that data in accordance with the methods described above related to a physical display **30** or device **10**, to determine the projectile trajectory and to provide the various clear shot indications, including path indicators and clear shot indicators.

The demo version of the game could be provided in kiosks at trade shows, on the manufacturer's or retailer's Web sites, or as downloadable applications, for example via Apple's AppStore.

Thus, potential users or buyers would be educated regarding the user, operation, and value of the clear shot technology.

A professional version of the game with more sophisticated graphics and environments could also be sold in the video gaming markets. Such a game would help introduce a new generation of users to the sports of archery and shooting. Ring of Fire Mode

We have discovered that in our bow hunting experience, knowing which objects are forty yards away is very useful. When objects that are forty yards away are known, objects that are a little closer are about thirty yards away and objects that are a little farther are about fifty yards away. Most bow hunters are comfortable shooting in this range between thirty and fifty yards. We refer to this as the "ring of fire." The ring of fire can be visualized in reference to FIG. 20 as the "donut" between the thirty and fifty yard circles with landmarks being the objects that lie on the forty-yard circle.

Another device aspect of the present invention is a ring of fire mode. When the device 10 is placed in ring of fire mode, the device 10 automatically, and continually, ranges objects as the device is moved. In one embodiment, when an object is about forty yards away, the cross hairs 900 and the distance indicator 910 flash. In one high-resolution display and digital camera embodiment, the objects in the ring of fire are highlighted (see discussion below regarding FIG. 31).

One use of the ring of fire mode is, while stalking potential targets, to scan the general area until the user reaches the optimal forty yard distance from the potential targets.

Another use of the ring of fire mode is, while positioning a tree stand, to determine landmarks on the ground that can be used to determine when passing targets have entered the ring of fire.

Yet another use of the ring of fire mode is, while calling targets such as elk or moose into a shooting range, to determine landmark objects that can be used to determine when called targets have entered the ring of fire.

High-Resolution Digital Display

FIG. 21 shows a high-resolution display 31 providing digital video superimposed with a clear shot indication, such as the twenty-yard indicator 920 and the forty-yard indicator 940.

FIG. 21 also shows optional placement of various mode indicators. For example, the bow mode indicator 992 and the trajectory mode indicator 996 are shown in the corners of a rectangular digital, high-resolution display 31, in this example, a touch screen display of an Apple iPhone 11.

One advantage of a digital, high-resolution display 31 is that it is not limited to the circular optical focus area. The additional area of the rectangular display can be used for various purposes. As shown in FIG. 21 the various mode indicators, including bow mode indicator 992, rifle mode indicator 994 (not shown), trajectory mode indicator 996, ring-of-fire indicator 998 (FIG. 31) can be moved outside the circular focus area, for example, to the lower corners. Other indicators, such as the distance indicator 910 angle and second range indicator 990, can also be moved outside the circular focus area to be less cluttered and to obscure less of the optical image information. Further, the rectangular high-resolution display 31 can provide more optical information.

Another advantage of a high-resolution display 31 is that the overlay information is produced by software rather than by a hardware chip. Custom hardware chips can be expensive

to design and manufacture and are less flexible. The overlay information generated by software for display on the high-resolution display 31 is higher quality, such as easier to read fonts, and more flexible, such as being able to display in different colors or locations of the screen to avoid obscuring the optical information being overlaid. The display can have more options, such as natural languages, different number systems such as Chinese, different units of measure, and so forth. Further, the software can be easily updated to incorporate new features, to improve calculations, or to support addition projectile information. Updates can be made in the field as well as in new models at a lower cost. For example, in some embodiments, new software can be downloaded over the Internet.

Other advantages of high-resolution display 31 will be discussed in references to FIG. 22 through FIG. 33B.

High-Resolution Touch Screen Display

FIG. 21 also shows an exemplary touch screen display as an embodiment of the high-resolution display 31. The high-resolution display 31 displays the video image as digitally captured by the digital camera 25 (see FIGS. 22, 23, 25, and 27) or as simulated by the game software; the overlay information such as the twenty-yard indicator 920 and the forty-yard indicator 940, the cross hairs 900, the distance indicator 910, the mode indicators (e.g. 992 and 996), and the display inputs 34, shown as range button (34a) and fire button (34b). The display inputs 34 are virtual buttons that are tapped on a touch screen, or clicked on with a pointing device (or game controller). The input 32 is a physical button. Both inputs 32 and display inputs 34 provide input to the computing element 16 (FIG. 3).

The embodiment shown comprises a mobile smart phone, in particular an Apple iPhone 11. Correlating FIG. 3 with FIG. 21, the computing element 16 is the processor of the iPhone 11; the memory 18 is the memory of the iPhone 11; the tilt sensor 14 is the accelerometer of the iPhone 11; and the display 30 is the touch screen display of the iPhone 11, an embodiment of the high-resolution display 31. The range sensor 12 is simulated in the game embodiments, or as enhancement to the iPhone 11 as discussed in reference to FIGS. 24 through 27.

Digital Rangefinder Devices

FIGS. 22 and 23 are rear and front perspective views, respectively, of a digital embodiment of rangefinder device 10.

The digital rangefinder device 10 comprise a housing 20, having an eyepiece 22 at the proximate end 28, a lens 24 and range sensor 12 at the distal end 26, and inputs 32 in various places on exterior. In contrast to the conventional rangefinder, the housing 20 contains a digital camera 25 that captures and digitizes video from the optical image through the lens 24 and contains a digital, high-resolution display 31. The video comprises a series of image frames. The computing element 16 (FIG. 3) processes the image frames, overlays each frame with various indicators, and displays the resulting image on the high-resolution display 31. Further, the high-resolution display 31 is controlled completely by the computing element 16 (FIG. 3) and need not display any of the optical image being captured; instead the high-resolution display 31 may display setup menus, recorded video, or animations generated by the computing element 16 (FIG. 3).

The eyepiece 22 may also be modified to accommodate viewing of the high-resolution display 31. In particular the eyepiece 22 may be inset and be protected by a shroud 35.

In contrast to the conventional rangefinder housing 20 as shown in FIGS. 14 and 15, the housing 20 of the digital rangefinder of FIGS. 22 and 23 is more compact, more light-

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weight, and easier to transport and use, due to removal of the end to end optics. For example, the length between the proximate end **28** and the distal end **26** is shown as less than about four inches. The width and height could be about two inches respectively

Digital Rangefinder Devices Comprising Mobile Smart Phones

FIGS. **24** and **25** are rear and front perspective views, respectively, of another digital rangefinder device, comprising an exemplary Apple iPhone and a housing with a range sensor, visor, handle and alternative inputs.

FIG. **24** is a rear perspective view of another digital rangefinder device **10**, comprising an exemplary Apple iPhone **11** and an alternate housing **21** with a range sensor **12**, visor **35**, handle **27** and alternative inputs, such as trigger input **33** and display inputs **34** (FIG. **21**). The iPhone **11** is inserted into the alternate housing **21** via a housing slot **23** and is electronically connected via a standard iPhone connector in the housing. The range sensor **12** and the trigger input **33** provide input to the processor of the iPhone **11** via the iPhone connector. The visor or shroud **35** increases the clarity of the high-resolution display **31** in the intense sun and shadows of the outdoors and limits the light from the display **31** which may be seen by wildlife. The shroud **35** is preferable made of flexible rubber or silicon material, and with the alternate housing **21** protects the iPhone **11** from the harsh environment of the outdoors.

FIG. **25** is a front perspective view of the rangefinder device of FIG. **24**;

FIG. **26** is a rear perspective view of another digital rangefinder device, comprising an exemplary Apple iPhone **11** and an alternate housing **21** with a range sensor **12** and visor **35**.

FIG. **27** is a front perspective view of the rangefinder device of FIG. **26**.

In contrast to the alternate housing **21** as shown in FIGS. **24** and **25**, the alternate housing **21** of the digital rangefinder of FIGS. **26** and **27** is more compact, more lightweight, and easier to transport and use, due to removal of the handle **27**, trigger input **33**, and reduction in size of range sensor **12**.

In alternate embodiments (not shown), the iPhone **11** is inserted through the shroud **35** (rather than housing slot **23**) and one or more holes in the alternate housing **21** provide access to the earphone jack. In these embodiments, the physical buttons on the iPhone are preferably covered and protected by flexible material.

Embodiments comprising mobile smart devices, such as iPhone **11** or Droid have several advantages over conventional rangefinders. First, the user has one less item to carry this reduces the overall weight and complexity. Second the range finding device has a lower incremental cost to manufacture, being just the alternate housing **21** and the range sensor **12**. The processor (computing element **16**), tilt sensor **14**, digital camera **25**, high-resolution display **31**, and inputs **32** (including touch screen display inputs **34**) of the mobile smart device is used to provide the necessary components of the digital rangefinder device **10**. Third, the mobile smart device, such as iPhone **11**, has other useful features such as global positioning system (GPS), virtual maps, satellite images, emergency communications, video capture, video playback, digital photographs, etc.

Advantages of mobile smart device are explained with an exemplary scenario. The user uses the GPS and satellite images to travel to a hunting spot identified on a previous trip; however the topographical maps and satellite images allowed the user to find a more direct, shorter route. A group of targets are located in thick brush. The ring of fire mode is activated to

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approach the group of targets until a comfortable shoot range is reached. Zoom video is taken showing the details of the targets such as which are does and bucks, number of points on the antlers, size of the animals. The dynamic clear shot trajectory mode is used to identify potential obstacles and to position the user and the weapon for a clear shot. The user notes the true aiming point (**980**), as well as angle and second range indicator **990**. A photo is taken of a selected target. The photo is marked with the GPS coordinates and time. A second video is captured showing an animated projectile trajectory **2** path from a straight view (such as discussed in reference to FIGS. **28** and **29**). The motion sensors of the iPhone **11** are used to determine any projectile inertia for a FIG. **29** scenario. A third video is captured showing the animated projectile trajectory **2** path from a side perspective view (such as discussed in reference to FIG. **32**). The weapon is aimed based on the information provided by the device **10**. When the projectile is fired, a fourth video is captured showing the actual projectile trajectory **2** and the success or failure of the shot. If Internet access is available via WiFi or via cellular wireless, the photo and videos can be uploaded to friends, video producers, or social networking sites. Any of the videos can be replayed.

In yet another more sophisticated embodiment of a very smart rangefinder device **10**, an analysis of the second video can be compared to an analysis of the fourth video and the device **10** can automatically recalibrate to match the true trajectory captured in the fourth video. The true parabola values, the air drag and the cross wind drift can be determined and used for the next shot. After a series of shots in different directions the true wind direction and speed can be determined. Thus, the smart rangefinder device **10** learns from its environment. If a significant time has passed the previous wind direction and speed can be confirmed, or forgotten and relearned.

Full Projectile Trajectory Sequence Display

FIG. **28** illustrates a sequence of display frames **50** (**50a** through **50f**), on a high-resolution display **31**, showing the projectile trajectory at various points along the path. This sequence illustrates how the clear shot technology dynamically determines the display locations for the path indicators.

Each frame shows a single path indicator **930** as a dot and also shows the intermediate range (as a number following an arrow) that the dot represents in the trajectory path.

Frame **50a** shows a twenty-yard indicator **920** followed by an arrow and the number twenty (e.g. $\leftarrow 20$). The number indicates the number of yards of the intermediate range (true horizontal distance) to a point in the projectile trajectory **2** (see for example, FIG. **7D** and FIG. **13A**).

Frame **50b** shows the path indicator **930** a little lower with a twenty-one yard intermediate range indication.

Frame **50c** shows the path indicator dot still lower with a twenty-two yard intermediate range indication.

Frame **50d** shows the path indicator dot still lower with a twenty-three yard intermediate range indication.

Frame **50e** shows the path indicator dot still lower with a twenty-four yard intermediate range indication.

Frame **50f** shows the path indicator dot still lower with a twenty-five yard intermediate range indication. In one embodiment, the dot is replace with the don't shoot indicator **960** (see discussion above regarding FIGS. **11C** and **11D**).

Skipping some frames in the full sequence, frame **50g** shows the path indicator dot with a thirty-nine yard intermediate range indication. Because several frames have been skipped the dot is significantly lower.

Frame **50h** shows the forty-yard indicator **940** with a forty yard intermediate range indication.

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Frame **50i** shows the path indicator dot with a forty-one yard intermediate range indication.

Skipping some frames again, frame **50j** shows the path indicator dot with a fifty-eight yard intermediate range indication. Because several frames have been skipped the dot is significantly lower, just above the cross hairs **900**.

Frame **50k** shows the path indicator dot with a fifty-nine yard intermediate range indication.

Frame **50l** shows the path indicator dot at the target, at 60 yards.

The full sequence from one yard (not shown) to 60 yards can be shown in an animation at one frame a second in sixty seconds, at six frames a second in ten seconds, or preferably at ten frames per second in six seconds. Such an animation provides projectile awareness for the full projectile trajectory **2** path. In the don't shoot indicator **960** embodiments, the obstacle that prevents the clear shot is clearly indicated in the animation. Alternatively, the portion of the optical image (as digitized) can be highlighted as discussed in reference to FIG. **30**.

Also in frames **50 (a-l)**, the mode indicators (shown like **992** and **996** of FIG. **21**) are shown outside the circular focus area and the distance indicator (shown like **910** of FIG. **30**) uses a high-resolution font rather than a segmented display, as discussed above.

Full Projectile Trajectory Sequence Display with Drift Adjustments

FIG. **29** illustrates a high-resolution display **31** showing a plurality of locations on a projectile trajectory adjusted for wind or weapon inertia.

Another advantage of the high-resolution display **31** is that the path indicators **930**, shown in FIG. **29** as a sequence of dots, can be displayed anywhere on the display. For example, a cross wind will cause the projectile to drift. The user can enter data into the rangefinder device **10** to indicate the current relative cross wind speed (or estimate). The cross wind data can be correlated with projectile cross drag data to display a true aiming point (**980** not shown) and show the corresponding diagonal sequence of points of the projectile trajectory. Preferably, an animation, as discussed in relation to FIG. **28**, would show one point at a time with the corresponding intermediate range indication.

If a projectile is fired from a moving vehicle, such as a truck, jet, or a helicopter the projectile will have initial inertia (or acceleration) relative to the ground target. The computing element **16** (FIG. **3**) can adjust the display to show the apparent drift resulting from the inertia (velocity and/or acceleration) of the projectile at the time of firing. In these situations the path on the display may be a curve and may rise from below the cross hairs (**900**).

Further, if the projectile misses the target, additional path indicators in an extended sequence could show where the projectile would be beyond the target. For example, the dots shown to the right of the cross hairs **900** could represent each yard after the target is missed. This provide projectile awareness in the case the target moves or is missed by the projectile. Obstacle Image Highlighting

FIG. **30** illustrates a high-resolution display **31** showing portions of an optical image that has been highlighted to show objects at an indicated range. In this exemplary embodiment, a portion of the image of the tree branch **710** is shown with an image highlight **810**. The image highlight **810** is done in various ways. As shown in FIG. **30**, the computing element **16** (FIG. **3**) in combination with the range sensor **12** (FIG. **3**) has determined a portion of the branch **710** which has been ranged at 40 yards and highlighted the edges and features of the object, in this case the portion of the branch **710**. Alternatively

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the portion of the object could be highlighted with a shade of red or yellow or some other color. Different colors could be used to indicate objects in the trajectory path versus objects that are clear, or to indicate objects at different intermediate ranges.

In this exemplary image, the tree branch **710** is an obstacle in the trajectory path at forty yards. The portion of the branch **710** that blocks the path is highlighted with the image highlight **810**. In an automatic mode, the user could move the device **10** to a different location until the obstacle is no longer highlighted, indicating that a shot from that location would be clear.

FIG. **30** also illustrates advantages of the high-resolution display **31** wherein the distance indicator **910** is displayed with a high-resolution font which can be dynamically displayed in colors and at positions that do not adversely affect the visibility of the overlaid video image (as opposed to fixed segments of FIG. **10**).

Ring of Fire Highlighting

FIG. **31** illustrates a high-resolution display showing portions of an optical image that has been highlighted to show objects in the ring of fire.

As discussed above, most bow hunters are comfortable shooting in a range between thirty and fifty yards. In ring of fire mode, any object which is at a predetermined range, such as forty yards, will be automatically highlighted with an image highlight **810** as the user moves device **10**. The ring-of-fire indicator **998** is illuminated when the device **10** is in ring of fire mode.

The image highlight **810** is done in various ways. As shown in FIG. **31**, the computing element **16** (FIG. **3**) in combination with the range sensor **12** (FIG. **3**) has determined a portion of the branch **710** which has been ranged at 40 yards and highlighted the edges and features of the object, in this case the portion of the branch **710**. Alternatively the portion of the object could be highlighted with a shade of green or some other color.

In this exemplary image, the tree branch **710** is an object that is about forty yards away. The user is automatically informed by the image highlighting which objects are at the predetermined distances. The user is then able to use those objects as a reference for those objects that are a few yards closer (e.g. about greater than thirty yards) or a few yards farther away (e.g. about less than fifty yards). When approaching a group of targets, the user can approach until a centrally located object becomes highlighted, then each target will be at a comfortable shooting distance. Alternatively, when in a tree stand or when calling targets into a shooting area, a number of reference objects located at the predetermined distance, such as forty yards, such as a bush along a path, are automatically visualized.

Image Layer Projectile Trajectory Animation

FIG. **32** illustrates an animation on high-resolution display **31** showing portions of an optical image which has been split into image layers **800** that represent objects at respective ranges, the layers **800** being skewed to represent a side perspective and the animation showing the projectile moving through image layers **800** along the projectile trajectory **2**.

As discussed above, in a digital rangefinder device **10** with a high-resolution display **31**, the high-resolution display **31** does not have to display the video which currently being captured via the digital camera **25**. A frame **50** of the video can be frozen and analyzed by the computing element **16**, along with range data from the range sensor **12**. Based on this analysis the image can be separated into a plurality of image layers **800**, each image layer **800** showing only the portions of the image located at about the same distance.

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In the exemplary illustration of FIG. 32, a tree with a branch 710 is located about 20 yards away and are shown in image layer 800a. Also the target T and a bush 730 are located together about sixty yards away and are shown in image layer 800b. Each image layer 800 is skewed to create a side perspective view and displayed relative to each other on the high-resolution display 31. The distance of the first image layer 800a is indicated below it, for example, indicated twenty yards. The distance of the second image layer 800b is indicated below it, for example, indicated sixty yards. These image layers 800 are exemplary; there could be any number of image layers at any range. For example, there could be a branch at ten yards, a tree at 23 yards, a bush at 45 yards, and a target at 57 yards.

Once the side perspective view is displayed, the projectile trajectory 2 can be displayed, preferably shown passing through each image layer 800. In one embodiment, the projectile could leave a trail as it passes. In another embodiment, the points along the path could be illuminated as the path is animated. In some embodiments, objects that are in the trajectory path are indicated with an image highlight 810 (as in FIG. 30) or with a don't shoot indicator 960 (similar to FIG. 11D). In an automatic mode, the user could move the device 10 to a different location until the object is no longer shown as an obstacle, indicating that a shot from that location would be clear. In one automatic mode, the high-resolution display 31 automatically switch between live optical view and the image layer side perspective view. In another mode, the user would press an input to see the image layer side perspective view.

In yet another embodiment, every frame 50, such as the sixty frames discussed in reference to FIG. 28, is shown with an exemplary projectile flying through each frame in an animation. The frames 50 could be normal or could be skewed to create a side perspective view with a subset of the frames being visible on the screen at one time, e.g. three or four skewed frames would move across the screen relative to a stationary exemplary projectile until all sixty frames 50 have been displayed in sequence.

In yet another embodiment the high-resolution display 31 can be split into two panes. One pane showing the view of FIG. 28, FIG. 29, or FIG. 30 and the other pane showing the view of FIG. 32. The animations in both panes could be synchronized.

Virtual Bow Sight Pins

FIG. 33A illustrates a high-resolution display 31 showing a plurality of virtual bow sight pins, such as virtual twenty-yard pin 620, virtual forty-yard pin 640, and virtual sixty-yard pin 660.

In this simple embodiment, a user is able to position one or more one or more virtual bow sight pins at any position they want, forming a virtual bow sight that is consistent with an individual bow.

FIG. 33A illustrates another advantage of the high-resolution display 31 wherein one or more virtual bow sight pins are dynamically displayed at any positions (as opposed to fixed segments such as those of FIG. 10). The color of the virtual bow sight pins can be selected by the user.

In embodiments where the focal range (or magnification factor) of the device 10 is fixed (e.g. 5x or 7x), the virtual bow sight pins are dynamically positioned, relative to cross hairs 900, based on the current range to the target as indicated by the distance indicator 910. The example shown has a distance indication of sixty yards so the virtual sixty-yard pin 660 is aligned with the cross hairs 900, and the virtual twenty-yard pin 620 and the virtual forty-yard pin 640 are at the fixed positions relative to the virtual sixty-yard pin 660. If a target were sensed at thirty yards, the group of virtual bow sight pins

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would be positioned such that the virtual twenty-yard pin 620 would be just above, and the virtual forty-yard pin 640 would be just below, respectively, the cross hairs 900. Likewise, if a target were sensed at forty five yards, the group of virtual bow sight pins would be positioned such that the virtual forty-yard pin 640 would be just slightly above the cross hairs 900.

In embodiments where the focal range (or magnification factor) of the device 10 is variable (e.g. with zoom in and zoom out capabilities), the virtual bow sight pins are dynamically positioned, relative to each other, based on the current magnification factor.

FIG. 33B illustrates another embodiment of a high-resolution display 31 showing a single virtual bow sight pin, for example a virtual twenty-yard pin 620. When the target is ranged the virtual pin is displayed above the cross hairs 900. The virtual twenty-yard pin 620 is calibrated to an individual bow, in a manner similar to the calibrating the twenty-yard indicator 920 (as explained in references to FIGS. 18A through 18E above). The virtual twenty-yard pin 620 indicates a visual point in the image, which is the aiming point 982. Because the aiming point 982 is provided, there is no need to provide any other data such as the distance indicator 910 or angle and second range indicator 990 (as also shown above in FIG. 19C and FIG. 19D). The use is simple and does not require the user to use brainpower to pick the right number from the display and then estimate an aiming point using the nearest bow sight pin. The user ranges the target and is shown the aiming point 982 (as indicated by the virtual twenty-yard pin 620) and then positions the real twenty-yard pin 220 on the same point visualized in the high-resolution display 31. The user also simultaneously can visualize whether or not there is a clear shot. In this example, the virtual twenty-yard pin 620 is displayed just below the branch with the bald eagle 720. The user can be confident that the arrow will not hit the branch, the bald eagle 720, nor the bush 730 (which are at 40 yards in this exemplary 60 yard shot); at the same time the user knows exactly where to aim using the twenty-yard pin 220 to hit the target T.

Enhanced ClearShot Technology for Rifle and Military Markets

Various embodiments of the inventions discussed above have been incorporated in Bushnell's The Truth with ClearShot™ laser rangefinder. This product has been very successful and has been critically acclaimed and well received by the industry, especially for bow hunting.

However, the layout of the display, e.g. see FIG. 10, with for example, a 4x zoom is limited to relative slow projectiles such as arrows and black powder rifle balls (e.g. less than 400 feet per second), which are typically shot at targets less than 80 yards away.

Modern rifles with high-performance cartridge bullets and other military projectiles such as tank guns can travel 10 to 20 times faster, and can be shot at targets that are hundreds or thousands of yards away. These higher velocity projectiles have a flatter projectile trajectory and the aiming point is closer to the target.

What is needed for higher velocity projectiles, such as those in the rifle hunting, law enforcement, and military industries, is a means for showing a relative aiming point using a reference representing an enlarged view of the target. Relative Aiming Point

The following sections describe various enhancements to the clear shot technology discussed above, which provide a relative aiming point to meet the needs of users of higher velocity projectiles.

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Relative Aiming Point Relative to a Reference of a Predetermined Height

FIGS. 34A through 34E illustrate displays showing embodiments of a relative aiming point 1000 shown relative to a reference of a predetermined size, the reference shown by various means such as a reference image 1002, reference indicators 1006 lines, or a generic reference 1005.

FIG. 34A illustrates a display 30 showing an embodiment of a relative aiming point 1000 shown relative to a reference of a predetermined size. The display 30 shows the active display elements when a target T is ranged at four hundred yards. Note that the target T is visually much smaller than the deer shown in FIG. 33B which is ranged at sixty yards. The display 30 shows cross hairs 900 (shown here with a center circle) which are placed on the target T. The display 30 dynamically shows that the horizontal range is four hundred yards in a horizontal distance indicator 914.

In this embodiment, the reference is shown as a reference image 1002, for example as a generic deer with a chest height of 18 inches. The chest height is measured from the belly to the top of the back. The reference image 1002, such as an image of a deer, can be selected by the user in settings 1034 (discussed below in reference to FIGS. 38A through 38H and in FIG. 41). The user can also set the chest height for the deer, based on predetermined sizes for typical deer, such as 14 inches, 16 inches, or 18 inches.

This embodiment also shows reference target 1004 placed in the reference image 1002.

Operation of the Relative Aiming Point

FIG. 34A shows that the optical image of the deer, target T, at four hundred yards is very small. The selectable path indicators 930 (as shown in the bow mode embodiment in FIG. 10) do not have high enough precision to be useful for a long-range target T, such as at four hundred yards. This enhancement provides a rifle mode which can be combined with the bow mode in the same device, or which can be implemented independently in rangefinders used in the rifle and military markets.

Initially, the user sets up the rangefinder device 10 by selecting rifle mode; calibrating the device to the zero of the rifle sight or scope, and the ballistic code of the specific ammunition; selecting a reference type (such as the deer reference image 1002 as shown); and selecting a reference size. See additional discussion below regarding settings in FIG. 41.

When the user ranges a target T, the rangefinder device 10 determines a line of sight 3 distance (e.g. the laser distance), determines an angle (using a tilt sensor or accelerometer), and then uses the line of sight distance and the angle to determine a horizontal 4 distance to the target T, which is displayed in the horizontal distance indicator 914.

Next, the device 10 determines the projectile trajectory 2, by a method similar to that described in relation to FIGS. 12, 13A, and 13B. However, in rifle mode the shape of the parabola is determined by the ballistic code entered in settings 1034. The value of A for the parabola is determined from the ballistic code preferably in a lookup table stored in the device 10. Note that when a user sets the sight or scope to zero at 100 yards, 100 yards becomes the intermediate point analogous to the 20 yard point P_{20} , for example, in the discussion regarding FIG. 13B, the 20 yard calibration point, for example, in the discussion regarding FIG. 18E, and the 20 yard aiming point, for example, in the discussion regarding FIGS. 9B and 18F.

For example, a .270 Winchester, zeroed at 100 yards, has about a 10 inch drop at 285 yards.

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After calculating the aiming point 982, in relation to the target T, the reference image 1002 is displayed, and the relative aiming point 1000 is displayed relative to the reference using the predetermined reference height, for example 18 inches.

In the exemplary embodiment shown in FIG. 34A, the deer has a predetermined chest height of 18 inches as set by the user. The relative aiming point 1000 is determined to be about 21 inches based on the ballistic code and the 100 yard zero settings, and based on the horizontal distance of 400 yards determined by the rangefinder device 10.

In the FIG. 34A embodiment, the reference image 1002 has a fixed size and position. The relative aiming point 1000 is displayed dynamically based on the measured horizontal distance using the current ballistic, zero, and reference size settings. If the horizontal distance is less than the zero setting, the relative aiming point 1000 is displayed below the reference target 1004. If the horizontal distance is the same as the zero setting, the relative aiming point 1000 is the reference target 1004. If the horizontal distance is greater than the zero setting the relative aiming point 1000 is displayed above the reference target 1004.

Relative Aiming Point Relative to Reference Lines

FIG. 34B illustrates a display 30 showing an embodiment of a relative aiming point 1000 shown relative to a reference indicator 1006 shown as reference lines. Like FIG. 34A, the display 30 shows cross hairs 900 and dynamically shows the horizontal range in a horizontal distance indicator 914.

In this embodiment, the reference is shown as the reference indicator 1006 shown as reference lines.

This embodiment also shows reference target 1004 centered in the reference indicator 1006.

In this embodiment, the reference indicator 1006 has a fixed size and position. The relative aiming point 1000 is displayed dynamically based on the measured horizontal distance using the current ballistic, zero, and reference size settings.

Relative Aiming Point Relative to Reference Image and Reference Multiples

FIG. 34C illustrates a display 30 showing an embodiment of a relative aiming point 1000 shown relative to a reference image 1002 shown as a deer. Like FIG. 34A, the display 30 shows cross hairs 900 and dynamically shows the horizontal range in a horizontal distance indicator 914.

In this embodiment, the reference is shown as the reference image 1002 with a plurality of reference multiples 1007a-c, shown as dashed lines. Each reference multiple 1007 is the same height as the reference height, in this example, the same as the chest height of the deer. Reference multiples 1007 are useful for very long shots where the bullet drop larger than the size of the reference. The user 100 can visualize the reference height and then pick an aiming point that is relative to a multiple of the target's visualized height in the scope.

This embodiment also shows reference target 1004 centered in the reference indicator 1006.

In this embodiment, the reference image 1002 and reference multiples 1007a-c have fixed heights and positions. The relative aiming point 1000 is displayed dynamically based on the measured horizontal distance using the current ballistic, zero, and reference size settings.

Relative Aiming Point Relative to Reference Lines and Reference Multiples

FIG. 34D illustrates a display 30 showing an embodiment of a relative aiming point 1000 shown relative to a reference indicator 1006 shown as reference lines. Like FIG. 34A, the display 30 shows cross hairs 900 and dynamically shows the horizontal range in a horizontal distance indicator 914.

In this embodiment, the reference is shown as the reference indicator **1006** shown as reference lines with a plurality of reference multiples **1007a-c**, shown as dashed lines. Each reference multiple **1007** is the same height as the reference height. Reference multiples **1007** are useful for very long shots where the bullet drop larger than the size of the reference. The user **100** can visualize the reference height and then pick an aiming point that is relative to a multiple of the target's visualized height in the scope.

This embodiment also shows reference target **1004** centered in the reference indicator **1006**.

In this embodiment, the reference indicator **1006** and reference multiples **1007a-c** have fixed heights and positions. The relative aiming point **1000** is displayed dynamically based on the measured horizontal distance using the current ballistic, zero, and reference size settings.

Relative Aiming Point Relative to Generic Reference

FIG. **34E** illustrates a display **30** showing an embodiment of a relative aiming point **1000** shown relative to a generic reference **1005** shown as generic stick figure. Like FIG. **34A**, the display **30** shows cross hairs **900** and dynamically shows the horizontal range in a horizontal distance indicator **914**.

In this embodiment, the reference is shown as the generic reference **1005**. This generic reference **1005** can be used for a variety of four legged mammals, including deer, elk, antelope, moose, coyote, skunk, etc. The generic image can be permanently set simplifying the settings required in this embodiment.

This embodiment also shows reference target **1004** centered in the reference indicator **1006**.

In this embodiment, the generic reference **1005** has a fixed height and position. The relative aiming point **1000** is displayed dynamically based on the measured horizontal distance using the current ballistic, zero, and reference size settings.

Relative Aiming Point Options

FIGS. **35A** through **35C** illustrate various options for showing a relative aiming point **1000** relative to a reference indicator **1006**, including an optional reference target **1004** or wind correction.

FIGS. **35A** through **35C** illustrate a subset of a display **30** showing embodiments of a relative aiming point **1000** shown relative to a reference indicator **1006** shown as reference lines.

FIG. **35A** shows an optional reference target **1004** centered in the reference indicator **1006**.

FIG. **35B** shows that the optional reference target **1004** can be omitted. While the reference target **1004** is currently preferred and is generally shown in most of the figures in this section, relative aiming point **1000** can be implemented without explicitly showing the reference target **1004**, and could be omitted from any specific embodiment.

FIG. **35C** shows the relative aiming point **1000** offset from the reference target **1004** wherein the offset adjusts for cross wind drift. In this specific case, the reference target **1004** is useful to visualize the amount of cross wind drift adjustment. Horizontal Distance and Angle Display Options

FIGS. **36A** through **36C** illustrates various options for showing line of sight distance, horizontal distance, and angle.

FIG. **19A** shows a conventional display of angle and second range indicators **990**.

In other display layouts, the line of sight distance indicator **910** is displayed in larger digits while the angle and horizontal distance is displayed in smaller digits. However, the most important number for the user **100** is the horizontal distances. An improved display layout having better user interface design will show only the horizontal distance (see FIG. **37A**)

or show the horizontal distance as the primary number (see FIGS. **36A** through **36C**, and FIG. **37B**).

FIG. **36A** shows a portion of a display **30** where a horizontal distance indicator **914** has the largest digits, with a distance indicator **910** and an angle indicator **912** shown below in smaller digits.

FIGS. **36B** and **36C** shows a portion of a display **30** where a horizontal distance indicator **914** has the largest digits, with a distance indicator **910** and an angle indicator **912** both in smaller digits, shown above when the target **T** is uphill (FIG. **36B**, see also FIG. **7B**) and shown below when the target **T** is downhill (FIG. **36C**, see also FIG. **7C**). This embodiment is more intuitive and shows graphically the horizontal distance indicator **914** next to the horizontal line in the angle graphic, the angle indicator **912** inside the angle, and the line of sight distance indicator **910** next to an uphill line in a first angle graphic (FIG. **36B**) or next to a downhill line in a second angle graphic (FIG. **36C**). In contrast to FIGS. **19A** and **36A** the user does not have to recognize and interpret the plus or minus sign in the angle indicator **912**; instead it is shown graphically for better user cognition.

Display Layouts for Relative Aiming Point

FIGS. **37A** and **37B** show embodiments of layout for the display segments.

FIG. **37A** shows an embodiment of a layout for the display segments. An exemplary display **30** comprises segments forming cross hairs **900**, a horizontal distance indicator **914**, a reference target **1004**, a reference indicator **1006**, and a plurality of selectable aiming point indicators **1010**.

The plurality of selectable aiming point indicators **1010** are dynamically and selectively illuminated to provide the relative aiming point **1000**.

In other embodiments, two or more reference images **1002** or a generic reference **1005** could also be added to the layout, each as a single segment, which are dynamically and selectively illuminated to provide the reference based on the settings. See FIGS. **38A** through **38H** and FIG. **41**.

FIG. **37B** shows an embodiment of a more robust layout for the display segments. An exemplary display **30** comprises segments forming cross hairs **900**, a horizontal distance indicator **914**, selectable path indicators **930**, an off screen indicator **932**, angle and second range indicator **990**, a reference target **1004**, a reference indicator **1006**, reference multiples **1007a-c**, a separator **1008**, and a plurality of selectable aiming point indicators **1010**.

This embodiment supports the improved layout of FIGS. **36B** and **36C**.

This embodiment also supports the bow mode clear shot technology similar to the layout of FIG. **19E**.

The separator **1008** may be useful to help the user separate the target image and the relative aiming point portions of the display.

In hybrid embodiments, the selectable path indicators **930** would illuminate when the target **T** was close (e.g. visually larger than the reference height, such as **1006**) and the reference target **1004**, the reference indicator **1006**, reference multiples **1007a-c**, the separator **1008**, and one of the plurality of selectable aiming point indicators **1010** would illuminate when the target was far.

User Selectable Reference Images and Reference Sizes

FIGS. **38A** through **38H** show embodiments of various reference images **1002** with relative aiming points **1000**.

FIG. **38A** shows the reference image **1002** as a deer. When a deer is selected the user can also select from corresponding chest heights. Mule deer have chest heights that average 18

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inches. Whitetail deer have chest heights that average 16 inches. Deer height ranges could be between 14 and 18 inches.

FIG. 38B shows the reference image 1002 as an elk. When an elk is selected the user can also select from corresponding chest heights. Elk have chest heights that average 25 inches.

FIG. 38C shows the reference image 1002 as an antelope. When an antelope is selected the user can also select from corresponding chest heights. Antelope have chest heights between 15 and 16 inches.

FIG. 38D shows the reference image 1002 as a turkey. When a turkey is selected the user can also select from corresponding reference body heights.

FIG. 38E shows the reference image 1002 as a prairie dog. When a prairie dog is selected the user can also select from corresponding chest heights.

FIG. 38F shows the reference image 1002 as a terrorist. When a terrorist is selected the user can also select from corresponding body heights. Terrorists, for example, could have body heights between 4.5 and 6.5 feet.

FIG. 38G shows the reference image 1002 as a tank. When a tank is selected the user can also select from corresponding vehicle heights.

FIG. 38H shows the reference image 1002 as a target. When a target is selected the user can also select from corresponding target heights. Targets range from 6 inches to 36 inches.

Other reference images could include coyote, big horn sheep (20 inches), goats (20 inches) and moose (34 to 40 inches).

Aiming Point Relative to Enlarged Target Display

FIG. 39 illustrates a digital display 31 showing a relative aiming point 1000 relative to an enlarged target image 1020.

FIG. 39 illustrates a digital display 31 showing an embodiment of a relative aiming point 1000 shown relative to a reference of a predetermine size. The digital display 31 shows cross hairs 900 (shown here with a center circle) which are placed on the target T. The digital display 31 dynamically shows that the horizontal range is four hundred yards in a horizontal distance indicator 914.

In this embodiment, the reference is shown as an enlarged target image 1020. The enlarged target image 1020 is separate and distinct display element from the target T. When the target T is ranged, a digital snapshot is taken of the target T. The line of sight distance to the target T is known and thus can be enlarged to provide a reference of a predetermined size. The digital device 10 can optionally measure the chest height from the belly to the top of the back, and display the chest height in reference measurement 1022.

This embodiment also shows reference target 1004 placed in the reference image 1002.

The user 100 can range the target by tapping anywhere on a touch screen. Alternatively the user can click a physical button on the device or an optional virtual button on the screen such as the range button identified as input 34a.

The operation is similar to the operation of the display as described in reference to FIG. 34A, with the reference image 1002 being the enlarged target image 1020, and the optional calculation of the actual reference height.

The digital display 31 also provides an input to enter set up mode, i.e. a virtual settings control 1032 buttons. When the input is selected the device enters setup mode (see FIG. 41). Aiming Point Relative to Zoomed Target Display

FIGS. 40A through 40D illustrate embodiments of digital displays 31 showing relative aiming points 1000 relative to an zoomed target image, and zoom controls 1030.

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FIG. 40A illustrates a digital display 31 showing a relative aiming point 1000 relative to an zoomed target T image.

FIG. 40A illustrates a digital display 31 showing an embodiment of a relative aiming point 1000 shown relative to a reference of a predetermine size. The digital display 31 shows cross hairs 900 (shown here with a center circle) which are placed on the target T. The digital display 31 dynamically shows that the horizontal range is three hundred yards in a horizontal distance indicator 914.

In this embodiment, the reference is shown as a zoomed image of the target T. There is not separate reference.

The digital display includes a zoom control 1030 which allows the user 100 to zoom in and zoom out, and which displays the current zoom factor, e.g. 20x.

The user 100 can range the target by tapping anywhere on a touch screen (except in the zoom control). Alternatively the user can click a physical button on the device or a virtual button on the screen (not shown).

The operation is similar to the operation of the display as described in reference to FIG. 34A, with the reference image 1002 being the zoomed image of target T.

The digital display 31 also provides an input to enter set up mode, i.e. a virtual settings control 1032 buttons. When the input is selected the device enters setup mode (see FIG. 41).

FIG. 40B shows the same embodiment as FIG. 40A where the target T is ranged at 200 yards. Notice that the deer appears larger at the same zoom factor because it is closer. The relative aiming point 1000 is relative lower than in the 300 yard example of FIG. 40A. In this example, the relative aiming point 1000 is below the deer's back.

FIG. 40C shows the same embodiment as FIG. 40B where the target T is ranged at 200 yards. However instead of a small relative aiming point 1000 indicator, the relative aiming point 1000 is shown as a virtual reticle 1040a, shown as a mil-dot reticle. The virtual reticle 1040a is scaled to show the user 100 exactly what the user 100 will see in the corresponding physical scope. The type of reticle and the zoom factor of the scope would be addition settings associated with this embodiment.

FIG. 40D shows the same embodiment as FIG. 40C where the target T is ranged at 200 yards. However the virtual reticle 1040b is shown as a G2 reticle. The virtual reticle 1040a is scaled to show the user 100 exactly what the user 100 will see in the corresponding physical scope.

Settings and Calibration Related to Relative Aiming Point Embodiments

Various settings have been discussed above.

FIG. 41 illustrates a digital embodiment of a display showing various settings 1034.

Settings for units (i.e. yards or meters) and mode (bow or rifle) are well known as discussed above.

In some embodiments, the device 10 can be simplified by assuming that sight or scope is zeroed at 100 yards. In more complex embodiments (such as the one shown), the user can calibrate the device 10 to the sight or scope by setting a "zero at" setting.

In the preferred embodiment, the user would enter a ballistics code that indicates the characteristics of a specific ammunition and weapon. In rifle mode, the ballistics code is used to determine the projectile trajectory 2. Alternatively, the user enters the bullet drop, for example, in inches, at the zero at distance.

The reference type can also be set in settings. The exemplary embodiment shown in FIG. 41 shows the current setting as reference type and the choices include zoomed actual (e.g. FIGS. 40A through 40D), lines (e.g. FIG. 34B), lines with

multiples (e.g. FIG. 34D), deer (e.g. FIG. 38A), elk (e.g. FIG. 38B), antelope (e.g. FIG. 38C), turkey (e.g. FIG. 38D), coyote, prairie dog (e.g. FIG. 38E), tank (e.g. FIG. 38G), and others not visualized but accessible by selecting the scroll arrows at the top or bottom of the list. Alternatively in a simpler embodiment having only reference lines or a generic reference, the reference type can be removed for the required settings.

Once the reference type is selected, then the reference size can also be selected from corresponding ranges of sizes (as discussed above in relations to FIGS. 38A through 38H).

A digital display 31 provides a more robust interface as shown in FIG. 41. However, the same settings can be made on a display 30 such as a display with LCD segments similar to the settings discussed in relation to FIGS. 18A through 18E.

Although the invention has been described with reference to the preferred embodiments illustrated in the attached drawings, it is noted that equivalents may be employed and substitutions made herein without departing from the scope of the invention as recited in the claims.

Advantages

Faster

The clear shot technology and relative aiming point technology provides the user with visual indications that do not require mathematical calculations or adjustments. The user immediately sees and image in the rangefinder device, which is then replicated with the weapon. In other words, the user stays "right brained" allowing for rapid and accurate action.

Accurate

The clear shot technology provides an accurate projective trajectory to a ranged target that takes into account the obstacles that may be in the trajectory.

The relative aiming point technology provides an accurate aiming point relative to the target size reference.

Effective

Because the clear shot technology provides an accurate projective trajectory to a ranged target that takes into account the obstacles that may be in the trajectory, the user can adjust the position of the shot to ensure that an unexpected obstacle will not interfere with the shot. Thus, the first shot will always reach its target being more effective.

The relative aiming point technology provides an accurate aiming point that can the user can intuitively match.

Confidence

The clear shot technology gives the user confidence that despite numerous obstacles that may be near a projectile trajectory that a difficult shot can be successfully taken.

The relative aiming point technology gives the user confidence that the target will be hit.

This increased confidence will improve the user's performance and satisfaction.

Increased Safety

The clear shot provides increased safety. In some embodiments any obstacle in the projectile trajectory is indicated in the display. In a situation where obstacles cannot be ranged because of intervening obstacles, the clear shot indication is not provided. Thus, the user is assured that any obstacle that may be impacted by the projectile will not be unknowingly harmed.

Adjustable

The embodiments of these displays and rangefinders can be adjusted to be consistent with an individual user and associated sights, for example the specific pins on a individual user's bow sight and specific ammunition and scopes.

Lightweight

The enhanced features of the clear shot technology do not add weight to the convention device. Embodiments with a

digital camera and a high-resolution display have lighter weight than conventional rangefinders.

Easy to Transport and Use

Devices containing the clear shot technology are easy to transport and use. Embodiments with a digital camera and a high-resolution display are smaller.

Fun

Games containing displays simulating the clear shot technology are fun to play and help introduce a new generation of potential sportsman to the archery and shoot sports.

Conclusion, Ramification, and Scope

Accordingly, the reader will see that the enhanced displays, rangefinders, and methods provide important information regarding the projectile trajectory and importantly provide greater accuracy, effectiveness, and safety.

While the above descriptions contain several specifics these should not be construed as limitations on the scope of the invention, but rather as examples of some of the preferred embodiments thereof. Many other variations are possible. For example, the display can be manufactured in different ways and/or in different shapes to increase precision, reduce material, or simplify manufacturing. Further, this technology could be applied to military situations where the projectiles is fired from a cannon, tank, ship, or aircraft and where the obstacles could be moving objects such as helicopters or warfighters. Further, the path indicators could indicate points in the trajectory beyond the target, should the projectile miss the target. On the battlefield with three dimensional information, e.g. from satellite imaging and computer maps and charts, a computer using clear shot technology could aim an fire multiple weapons over mountains and through obstacles to continuously hit multiple targets. Additionally, the clear shot technology could be applied to golf where in a golf mode the device would indicate which club would result in a ball trajectory that would provide a clear shot through trees and branches. The variations could be used without departing from the scope and spirit of the novel features of the present invention.

Accordingly, the scope of the invention should be determined not by the illustrated embodiments, but by the appended claims and their legal equivalents.

We claim:

1. A system for indicating a relative aiming point for a target, the system comprising:

- a) a computing element for determining the projectile trajectory,
- b) a display having the relative aiming point and a reference having a predetermined reference height,
- c) a memory connected to the computing element,
- d) a housing containing the computing element, the display, and the memory,
- e) a range sensor for determining a first line of sight distance to the target,
- f) a tilt sensor for determining an angle to the target,
- g) at least one input on the surface of the housing,
- h) a lens for receiving an optical image of the target and at least one obstacle, and

i) an eyepiece for viewing the display,

wherein the display is connected to the computing element, wherein the range sensor, tilt sensor, and input are connected to the computing element, wherein the lens and eyepiece are connected to the housing,

wherein the system is a handheld rangefinder device,

wherein the relative aiming point indicates a height of the projectile trajectory at a predetermined intermediate range to the target, and

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wherein the relative aiming point corresponds to a sight or scope calibrated for the predetermined intermediate range to the target.

2. The system of claim 1, wherein the display further comprises a reference target placed in the reference.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein the reference is a reference image.

4. The system of claim 1, wherein the reference is a generic reference image.

5. The system of claim 1, wherein the reference is a user selectable reference image.

6. The system of claim 5, wherein the user selectable reference image is one of the group of a deer, elk, or antelope.

7. The system of claim 5, wherein the user selectable reference image is one of the group of a tank or a target.

8. The system of claim 1, wherein the reference is a reference indicator.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein the reference indicator comprises horizontal lines separate by a predetermined reference height.

10. The system of claim 1, wherein the display further comprises a plurality of reference multiples positioned above the reference indicating multiples of the predetermined reference height.

11. The system of claim 1, wherein the display further comprises a plurality of aiming point indicators, wherein one of the plurality of aiming point indicators is selectively illuminated to show the relative aiming point corresponding to a predetermined ballistic setting, the predetermined reference height, and calculated horizontal distance to the target.

12. The system of claim 1, wherein the display further comprises a horizontal distance indicator.

13. The system of claim 12, wherein the display further comprises an angle indicator.

14. The system of claim 1, wherein the reference is an enlarged target image separate from the original image of the target.

15. The system of claim 1, wherein the display further comprises a reference measurement, wherein the computing element recognizes the characteristics of an image of the target and calculates the actual height of the target.

16. The system of claim 1, wherein the display further comprises a zoom control, wherein an image of the target is displayed at a zoom factor indicated by the zoom control, and wherein the reference is the zoomed image of the target.

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17. The system of claim 1, wherein the relative aiming point is a virtual reticle.

18. The system of claim 1, further comprising a digital camera,

wherein the display is a high-resolution display, and wherein the handheld rangefinder device is a high-resolution handheld rangefinder device.

19. A method of using the system of claim 1, comprising the steps of:

- i) determining a range to a target,
- ii) determining the projectile trajectory based on predetermined ballistic settings, and
- iii) dynamically displaying the relative aiming point based on the determined range and the predetermined reference height of the reference.

20. A system for indicating a relative aiming point for a target, the system comprising:

- a) a computing element for determining the projectile trajectory,
 - b) an electronic display having the relative aiming point and a reference having a predetermined reference height,
 - c) a memory connected to the computing element,
 - d) a housing containing the computing element, the display, and the memory,
 - e) a range sensor for determining a first line of sight distance to the target,
 - d) a tilt sensor for determining an angle to the target,
 - e) at least one input on the surface of the housing,
 - f) a lens for receiving an optical image of the target and at least one obstacle, and
 - g) an eyepiece for viewing the display,
- wherein the display is connected to the computing element, wherein the range sensor, tilt sensor, and input are connected to the computing element,
- wherein the lens and eyepiece are connected to the housing,

wherein the system is a range finding device, wherein the relative aiming point indicates a height of the projectile trajectory at a predetermined intermediate range to the target, and

wherein the relative aiming point corresponds to a sight or scope calibrated for the predetermined intermediate range to the target.

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